

# THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

APRIL, 1865.

## Armada.

BOOK THE THIRD.

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE CLAIMS OF SOCIETY.



MORE than an hour after Allan had set forth on his exploring expedition through his own grounds, Midwinter rose, and enjoyed, in his turn, a full view by daylight of the magnificence of the new house.

Refreshed by his long night's rest, he descended the great staircase as cheerfully as Allan himself. One after another, he, too, looked into the spacious rooms on the ground-floor in breathless astonishment at the beauty and the luxury which surrounded him. "The house where I lived in service when I was a boy was a fine one," he thought, gaily; "but it was nothing to this! I wonder if Allan is as surprised and delighted as I am?" The beauty of the summer morning drew

PRINTER'S ERROR.—In the portion of "Armada" published in last month's number, at page 262, for—"here I am, at my very best, a good sixteen years older than he is," read:—"here I am, at my very best, a good *six* years older than he is."

him out through the open hall-door, as it had drawn his friend out before him. He ran briskly down the steps, humming the burden of one of the old vagabond tunes which he had danced to long since, in the old vagabond time. Even the memories of his wretched childhood took their colour, on that happy morning, from the bright medium through which he looked back at them. "If I was not out of practice," he thought to himself, as he leant on the fence and looked over at the park, "I could try some of my old tumbling tricks on that delicious grass." He turned; noticed two of the servants talking together near the shrubbery, and asked for news of the master of the house. The men pointed with a smile in the direction of the gardens; Mr. Armadale had gone that way more than an hour since, and had met (as had been reported) with Miss Milroy in the grounds. Midwinter followed the path through the shrubbery, but, on reaching the flower-garden, stopped, considered a little, and retraced his steps. "If Allan has met with the young lady," he said to himself, "Allan doesn't want me." He laughed as he drew that inevitable inference, and turned considerably to explore the beauties of Thorpe-Ambrose on the other side of the house.

Passing the angle of the front wall of the building, he descended some steps, advanced along a paved walk, turned another angle, and found himself in a strip of garden ground at the back of the house. Behind him was a row of small rooms situated on the level of the servants' offices. In front of him, on the farther side of the little garden, rose a wall, screened by a laurel hedge, and having a door at one end of it, leading past the stables to a gate that opened on the high road. Perceiving that he had only discovered, thus far, the shorter way to the house, used by the servants and tradespeople, Midwinter turned back again, and looked in at the window of one of the rooms on the basement story as he passed it. Were these the servants' offices? No; the offices were apparently in some other part of the ground-floor; the window he had looked in at was the window of a lumber-room. The next two rooms in the row were both empty. The fourth window, when he approached it, presented a little variety. It served also as a door; and it stood open to the garden at that moment.

Attracted by the book-shelves which he noticed on one of the walls, Midwinter stepped into the room. The books, few in number, did not detain him long; a glance at their backs was enough, without taking them down. The *Waverley Novels*, *Tales* by Miss Edgeworth, and by Miss Edgeworth's many followers, the *Poems* of Mrs. Hemans, with a few odd volumes of the illustrated gift-books of the period, composed the bulk of the little library. Midwinter turned to leave the room, when an object on one side of the window, which he had not previously noticed, caught his attention and stopped him. It was a statuette standing on a bracket—a reduced copy of the famous Niobe of the Florence Museum. He glanced from the statuette to the window, with a sudden doubt which set his heart throbbing fast. It was a French window; and the statuette was on his left hand as he stood before it. He looked out with a suspicion which

he had not felt yet. The view before him was the view of a lawn and garden. For a moment his mind struggled blindly to escape the conclusion which had seized it—and struggled in vain. Here, close round him and close before him; here, forcing him mercilessly back from the happy present to the horrible past, was the room that Allan had seen in the Second Vision of the Dream.

He waited, thinking and looking round him while he thought. There was wonderfully little disturbance in his face and manner; he looked steadily from one to the other of the few objects in the room, as if the discovery of it had saddened rather than surprised him. Matting of some foreign sort covered the floor. Two cane chairs and a plain table comprised the whole of the furniture. The walls were plainly papered, and bare—broken to the eye in one place by a door leading into the interior of the house; in another, by a small stove; in a third, by the book-shelves which Midwinter had already noticed. He returned to the books; and, this time, he took some of them down from the shelves.

The first that he opened contained lines in a woman's handwriting, traced in ink that had faded with time. He read the inscription—"Jane Armadale, from her beloved father. Thorpe-Ambrose, October, 1828." In the second, third, and fourth volumes that he opened, the same inscription reappeared. His previous knowledge of dates and persons helped him to draw the true inference from what he saw. The books must have belonged to Allan's mother; and she must have inscribed them with her name, in the interval of time between her return to Thorpe-Ambrose from Madeira, and the birth of her son. Midwinter passed on to a volume on another shelf—one of a series containing the writings of Mrs. Hemans. In this case, the blank leaf at the beginning of the book was filled on both sides with a copy of verses, the writing being still in Mrs. Armadale's hand. The verses were headed, "Farewell to Thorpe-Ambrose," and were dated "March, 1829"—two months only after Allan had been born.

Entirely without merit in itself, the only interest of the little poem was in the domestic story that it told. The very room in which Midwinter then stood was described—with the view on the garden, the window made to open on it, the book-shelves, the Niobe, and other more perishable ornaments which Time had destroyed. Here, at variance with her brothers, shrinking from her friends, the widow of the murdered man had, on her own acknowledgment, secluded herself, without other comfort than the love and forgiveness of her father, until her child was born. The father's mercy and the father's recent death filled many verses—happily too vague in their commonplace expression of penitence and despair, to give any hint of the marriage-story in Madeira to any reader who looked at them ignorant of the truth. A passing reference to the writer's estrangement from her surviving relatives, and to her approaching departure from Thorpe-Ambrose, followed. Last came the assertion of the mother's resolution to separate herself from all her old associations; to leave behind her every possession, even to the most trifling thing she

had, that could remind her of the miserable past; and to date her new life in the future from the birthday of the child who had been spared to console her—who was now the one earthly object that could still speak to her of love and hope. So the old story of passionate feeling that finds comfort in phrases rather than not find comfort at all, was told once again. So the poem in the faded ink faded away to its end.

Midwinter put the book back with a heavy sigh, and opened no other volume on the shelves. "Here in the country-house, or there on board the Wreck," he said bitterly, "the traces of my father's crime follow me, go where I may." He advanced towards the window—stopped and looked back into the lonely neglected little room. "Is *this* chance?" he asked himself. "The place where his mother suffered is the place he sees in the Dream; and the first morning in the new house is the morning that reveals it, not to *him*, but to *me*. Oh, Allan! Allan! how will it end?"

The thought had barely passed through his mind before he heard Allan's voice, from the paved walk at the side of the house, calling to him by his name. He hastily stepped out into the garden. At the same moment Allan came running round the corner, full of voluble apologies for having forgotten, in the society of his new neighbours, what was due to the laws of hospitality and the claims of his friend.

"I really haven't missed you," said Midwinter; "and I am very, very glad to hear that the new neighbours have produced such a pleasant impression on you already."

He tried, as he spoke, to lead the way back by the outside of the house; but Allan's slighty attention had been caught by the open window and the lonely little room. He stepped in immediately. Midwinter followed, and watched him in breathless anxiety, as he looked round. Not the slightest recollection of the Dream troubled Allan's easy mind. Not the slightest reference to it fell from the silent lips of his friend.

"Exactly the sort of place I should have expected you to hit on!" exclaimed Allan gaily. "Small and snug and unpretending. I know you, Master Midwinter! You'll be slipping off here, when the county families come visiting—and I rather think, on those dreadful occasions you won't find me far behind you. What's the matter? You look ill and out of spirits. Hungry? Of course you are! unpardonable of me to have kept you waiting—this door leads somewhere, I suppose; let's try a short cut into the house. Don't be afraid of my not keeping you company at breakfast. I didn't eat much at the cottage—I feasted my eyes on Miss Milroy, as the poets say. Oh, the darling! the darling! she turns you topsy-turvy the moment you look at her. As for her father; wait till you see his wonderful clock! It's twice the size of the famous clock at Strasburg, and the most tremendous striker ever heard yet in the memory of man!"

Singing the praises of his new friends in this strain, at the top of his voice, Allan hurried Midwinter along the stone passages on the basement floor which led, as he had rightly guessed, to a staircase communicating



with the hall. They passed the servants' offices on the way. At the sight of the cook and the roaring fire, disclosed through the open kitchen door, Allan's mind went off at a tangent, and Allan's dignity scattered itself to the four winds of heaven, as usual.

"Aha, Mrs. Gripper; there you are with your pots and pans, and your burning fiery furnace! One had need be Shadrach, Meshech, and the other fellow, to stand over that. Breakfast as soon as ever you like. Eggs, sausages, bacon, kidneys, marmalade, watercresses, coffee, and so forth. My friend and I belong to the select few whom it's a perfect privilege to cook for. Voluptuaries, Mrs. Gripper, voluptuaries, both of us. You'll see," continued Allan, as they went on towards the stairs, "I shall make that worthy creature young again; I'm better than a doctor for Mrs. Gripper. When she laughs she shakes her fat sides; and when she shakes her fat sides she exerts her muscular system; and when she exerts her muscular system — Ha! here's Susan again. Don't squeeze yourself flat against the banisters, my dear; if you don't mind hustling *me* on the stairs, I rather like hustling *you*. She looks like a full-blown rose when she blushes, doesn't she? Stop, Susan! I've some orders to give. Be very particular with Mr. Midwinter's room: shake up his bed like mad, and dust his furniture till those nice round arms of yours ache again. Nonsense, my dear fellow! I'm not too familiar with them; I'm only keeping them up to their work. Now then, Richard! where do we breakfast? Oh, here. Between ourselves, Midwinter, these splendid rooms of mine are a size too large for me; I don't feel as if I should ever be on intimate terms with my own furniture. My views in life are of the snug and slovenly sort—a kitchen chair, you know, and a low ceiling. Man wants but little here below, and wants that little long. That's not exactly the right quotation; but it expresses my meaning, and we'll let alone correcting it till the next opportunity."

"I beg your pardon," interposed Midwinter, "here is something waiting for you which you have not noticed yet."

As he spoke, he pointed a little impatiently to a letter lying on the breakfast-table. He could conceal the ominous discovery which he had made that morning, from Allan's knowledge; but he could not conquer the latent distrust of circumstances which was now roused again in his superstitious nature—the instinctive suspicion of everything that happened, no matter how common or how trifling the event, on the first memorable day when the new life began in the new house.

Allan ran his eye over the letter, and tossed it across the table to his friend. "I can't make head or tail of it," he said; "can you?"

Midwinter read the letter slowly, aloud. "Sir,—I trust you will pardon the liberty I take in sending these few lines to wait your arrival at Thorpe-Ambrose. In the event of circumstances not disposing you to place your law-business in the hands of Mr. Darch——" He suddenly stopped at that point, and considered a little.

"Darch is our friend the lawyer," said Allan, supposing Midwinter

had forgotten the name. "Don't you remember our spinning the half-crown on the cabin table, when I got the two offers for the cottage? Heads, the major; tails, the lawyer. This is the lawyer."

Without making any reply, Midwinter resumed reading the letter. "In the event of circumstances not disposing you to place your law-business in the hands of Mr. Darch, I beg to say that I shall be happy to take charge of your interests, if you feel willing to honour me with your confidence. Enclosing a reference (should you desire it) to my agents in London, and again apologizing for this intrusion, I beg to remain, Sir, respectfully yours, A. PEDGIFT, SENR."

"Circumstances?" repeated Midwinter, as he laid the letter down. "What circumstances can possibly indispose you to give your law-business to Mr. Darch?"

"Nothing can indispose me," said Allan. "Besides being the family lawyer here, Darch was the first to write me word at Paris of my coming in for my fortune; and, if I have got any business to give, of course he ought to have it."

Midwinter still looked distrustfully at the open letter on the table. "I am sadly afraid, Allan, there is something wrong already," he said. "This man would never have ventured on the application he has made to you, unless he had some good reason for believing it would succeed. If you wish to put yourself right at starting, you will send to Mr. Darch this morning, to tell him you are here, and you will take no notice for the present of Mr. Pedgift's letter."

Before more could be said on either side, the footman made his appearance with the breakfast tray. He was followed, after an interval, by the butler—a man of the essentially confidential kind, with a modulated voice, a courtly manner, and a bulbous nose. Anybody but Allan would have seen in his face that he had come into the room having a special communication to make to his master. Allan, who saw nothing under the surface, and whose head was running on the lawyer's letter, stopped him bluntly with the point-blank question:—"Who's Mr. Pedgift?"

The butler's sources of local knowledge opened confidentially on the instant. Mr. Pedgift was the second of the two lawyers in the town. Not so long-established, not so wealthy, not so universally looked-up-to as old Mr. Darch. Not doing the business of the highest people in the county, and not mixing freely with the best society, like old Mr. Darch. A very sufficient man, in his way, nevertheless. Known as a perfectly competent and respectable practitioner all round the neighbourhood. In short, professionally next best to Mr. Darch; and personally superior to him (if the expression might be permitted) in this respect—that Darch was a Crusty One, and Pedgift wasn't.

Having imparted this information, the butler, taking a wise advantage of his position, glided without a moment's stoppage, from Mr. Pedgift's character to the business that had brought him into the breakfast-room. The Midsummer Audit was near at hand; and the tenants were accus-

tomed to have a week's notice of the rent-day dinner. With this necessity pressing, and with no orders given as yet, and no steward in office at Thorpe-Ambrose, it appeared desirable that some confidential person should bring the matter forward. The butler was that confidential person; and he now ventured accordingly to trouble his master on the subject.

At this point, Allan opened his lips to interrupt, and was himself interrupted before he could utter a word.

"Wait!" interposed Midwinter, seeing in Allan's face that he was in danger of being publicly announced in the capacity of steward. "Wait!" he repeated eagerly, "till I can speak to you first."

The butler's courtly manner remained alike unruffled by Midwinter's sudden interference and by his own dismissal from the scene. Nothing but the mounting colour in his bulbous nose betrayed the sense of injury that animated him as he withdrew. Mr. Armadale's chance of regaling his friend and himself that day with the best wine in the cellar, trembled in the balance, as the butler took his way back to the basement story.

"This is beyond a joke, Allan," said Midwinter, when they were alone. "Somebody must meet your tenants on the rent-day who is really fit to take the steward's place. With the best will in the world to learn, it is impossible for *me* to master the business at a week's notice. Don't, pray don't let your anxiety for my welfare put you in a false position with other people! I should never forgive myself if I was the unlucky cause——"

"Gently, gently!" cried Allan, amazed at his friend's extraordinary earnestness. "If I write to London by to-night's post for the man who came down here before, will that satisfy you?"

Midwinter shook his head. "Our time is short," he said; "and the man may not be at liberty. Why not try in the neighbourhood first? You were going to write to Mr. Darch. Send at once, and see if he can't help us between this and post-time."

Allan withdrew to a side-table on which writing materials were placed. "You shall breakfast in peace, you old fidget," he replied—and addressed himself forthwith to Mr. Darch, with his usual Spartan brevity of epistolary expression. "Dear Sir,—Here I am, bag and baggage. Will you kindly oblige me by being my lawyer? I ask this, because I want to consult you at once. Please look in in the course of the day, and stop to dinner if you possibly can. Yours truly, ALLAN ARMADALE." Having read this composition aloud with unconcealed admiration of his own rapidity of literary execution, Allan addressed the letter to Mr. Darch, and rang the bell. "Here, Richard, take this at once, and wait for an answer. And, I say, if there's any news stirring in the town, pick it up and bring it back with you. See how I manage my servants!" continued Allan, joining his friend at the breakfast-table. "See how I adapt myself to my new duties! I haven't been down here one clear day yet, and I'm taking an interest in the neighbourhood already."

Breakfast over, the two friends went out to idle away the morning under the shade of a tree in the park. Noon came, and Richard never appeared. One o'clock struck, and still there were no signs of an answer from Mr. Darch. Midwinter's patience was not proof against the delay. He left Allan dozing on the grass, and went to the house to make inquiries. The town was described as little more than two miles distant; but the day of the week happened to be market-day, and Richard was being detained no doubt by some of the many acquaintances whom he would be sure to meet with on that occasion.

Half an hour later, the truant messenger returned, and was sent out to report himself to his master under the tree in the park.

"Any answer from Mr. Darch?" asked Midwinter, seeing that Allan was too lazy to put the question for himself.

"Mr. Darch was engaged, sir. I was desired to say that he would send an answer."

"Any news in the town?" inquired Allan, drowsily, without troubling himself to open his eyes.

"No, sir; nothing in particular."

Observing the man suspiciously as he made that reply, Midwinter detected in his face that he was not speaking the truth. He was plainly embarrassed, and plainly relieved when his master's silence allowed him to withdraw. After a little consideration, Midwinter followed, and overtook the retreating servant on the drive before the house.

"Richard," he said quietly, "if I was to guess that there is some news in the town, and that you don't like telling it to your master, should I be guessing the truth?"

The man started and changed colour. "I don't know how you have found it out, sir," he said; "but I can't deny you have guessed right."

"If you will let me hear what the news is, I will take the responsibility on myself of telling Mr. Armadale."

After some little hesitation, and some distrustful consideration on his side, of Midwinter's face, Richard at last prevailed on himself to repeat what he had heard that day in the town.

The news of Allan's sudden appearance at Thorpe-Ambrose had preceded the servant's arrival at his destination by some hours. Wherever he went, he found his master the subject of public discussion. The opinion of Allan's conduct among the leading townspeople, the resident gentry of the neighbourhood, and the principal tenants on the estate, was unanimously unfavourable. Only the day before, the committee for managing the public reception of the new squire had sketched the progress of the procession; had settled the serious question of the triumphal arches; and had appointed a competent person to solicit subscriptions for the flags, the flowers, the feasting, the fireworks, and the band. In less than a week more, the money could have been collected, and the rector would have written to Mr. Armadale to fix the day. And now, by Allan's own act, the public welcome waiting to honour him, had been cast back con-

temptuously in the public teeth! Everybody took for granted (what was unfortunately true) that he had received private information of the contemplated proceedings. Everybody declared that he had purposely stolen into his own house like a thief in the night (so the phrase ran), to escape accepting the offered civilities of his neighbours. In brief, the sensitive self-importance of the little town was wounded to the quick; and of Allan's once enviable position in the estimation of the neighbourhood not a vestige remained.

For a moment, Midwinter faced the messenger of evil tidings in silent distress. That moment past, the sense of Allan's critical position roused him, now the evil was known, to seek the remedy.

"Has the little you have seen of your master, Richard, inclined you to like him?" he asked.

This time, the man answered without hesitation, "A pleasanter and kinder gentleman than Mr. Armadale no one could wish to serve."

"If you think that," pursued Midwinter, "you won't object to give me some information which will help your master to set himself right with his neighbours. Come into the house."

He led the way into the library, and, after asking the necessary questions, took down in writing a list of the names and addresses of the most influential persons living in the town and its neighbourhood. This done, he rang the bell for the head footman, having previously sent Richard with a message to the stables, directing an open carriage to be ready in an hour's time.

"When the late Mr. Blanchard went out to make calls in the neighbourhood, it was your place to go with him, was it not?" he asked, when the upper servant appeared. "Very well. Be ready in an hour's time, if you please, to go out with Mr. Armadale." Having given that order, he left the house again on his way back to Allan, with the visiting list in his hand. He smiled a little sadly as he descended the steps. "Who would have imagined," he thought, "that my footboy's experience of the ways of gentlefolks, would be worth looking back at one day for Allan's sake?"

The object of the popular odium lay innocently slumbering on the grass, with his garden hat over his nose, his waistcoat unbuttoned, and his trousers wrinkled half way up his outstretched legs. Midwinter roused him without hesitation, and remorselessly repeated the servant's news.

Allan accepted the disclosure thus forced on him without the slightest disturbance of temper. "Oh, hang 'em!" was all he said. "Let's have another cigar." Midwinter took the cigar out of his hand, and, insisting on his treating the matter seriously, told him in plain words that he must set himself right with his offended neighbours by calling on them personally to make his apologies. Allan sat up on the grass in astonishment; his eyes opened wide in incredulous dismay. Did Midwinter positively meditate forcing him into a "chimney-pot hat," a nicely brushed frock-coat, and a clean pair of gloves? Was it actually in contemplation to

shut him up in a carriage, with his footman on the box and his card-case in his hand, and send him round from house to house, to tell a pack of fools that he begged their pardon for not letting them make a public show of him? If anything so outrageously absurd as this was really to be done, it could not be done that day, at any rate. He had promised to go back to the charming Milroy at the cottage and to take Midwinter with him. What earthly need had he of the good opinion of the resident gentry? The only friends he wanted were the friends he had got already. Let the whole neighbourhood turn its back on him if it liked—back or face the Squire of Thorpe-Ambrose didn't care two straws about it.

After allowing him to run on in this way until his whole stock of objections was exhausted, Midwinter wisely tried his personal influence next. He took Allan affectionately by the hand. "I am going to ask a great favour," he said. "If you won't call on these people for your own sake, will you call on them to please me?"

Allan delivered himself of a groan of despair, stared in mute surprise at the anxious face of his friend, and good-humouredly gave way. As Midwinter took his arm, and led him back to the house, he looked round with rueful eyes at the cattle hard by, placidly whisking their tails in the pleasant shade. "Don't mention it in the neighbourhood," he said; "I should like to change places with one of my own cows."

Midwinter left him to dress, engaging to return when the carriage was at the door. Allan's toilette did not promise to be a speedy one. He began it by reading his own visiting cards; and he advanced it a second stage by looking into his wardrobe, and devoting the resident gentry to the infernal regions. Before he could discover any third means of delaying his own proceedings, the necessary pretext was unexpectedly supplied by Richard's appearance with a note in his hand. The messenger had just called with Mr. Darch's answer. Allan briskly shut up the wardrobe, and gave his whole attention to the lawyer's letter. The lawyer's letter rewarded him by the following lines:—

"Sir,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your favour of to-day's date, honouring me with two proposals, namely, ONE inviting me to act as your legal adviser, and ONE inviting me to pay you a visit at your house. In reference to the first proposal, I beg permission to decline it with thanks. With regard to the second proposal, I have to inform you that circumstances have come to my knowledge relating to the letting of the cottage at Thorpe-Ambrose, which render it impossible for me (in justice to myself) to accept your invitation. I have ascertained, sir, that my offer reached you at the same time as Major Milroy's; and that, with both proposals thus before you, you gave the preference to a total stranger, who addressed you through a house-agent, over a man who had faithfully served your relatives for two generations, and who had been the first person to inform you of the most important event in your life. After this specimen of your estimate of what is due to the claims of common courtesy and common justice, I cannot flatter myself that I possess any



of the qualities which would fit me to take my place on the list of your friends.—I remain, sir, your obedient servant, JAMES DARCH."

"Stop the messenger!" cried Allan, leaping to his feet, his ruddy face aflame with indignation. "Give me pen, ink and paper! By the Lord Harry, they're a nice set of people in these parts; the whole neighbourhood is in a conspiracy to bully me!" He snatched up the pen in a fine frenzy of epistolary inspiration. "Sir,—I despise you and your letter.—" At that point the pen made a blot, and the writer was seized with a momentary hesitation. "Too strong," he thought; "I'll give it to the lawyer in his own cool and cutting style." He began again on a clean sheet of paper. "Sir,—You remind me of an Irish bull. I mean that story in Joe Miller, where Pat remarked, in the hearing of a wag hard by, that 'the reciprocity was all on one side.' Your reciprocity is all on one side. You take the privilege of refusing to be my lawyer, and then you complain of my taking the privilege of refusing to be your landlord." He paused fondly over those last words. "Neat!" he thought. "Argument and hard hitting both in one. I wonder where my knack of writing comes from?" He went on, and finished the letter in two more sentences. "As for your casting my invitation back in my teeth, I beg to inform you my teeth are none the worse for it. I am equally glad to have nothing to say to you, either in the capacity of a friend or a tenant.—ALLAN ARMADALE." He nodded exultingly at his own composition, as he addressed it and sent it down to the messenger. "Darch's hide must be a thick one," he said, "if he doesn't feel *that*!"

The sound of wheels outside suddenly recalled him to the business of the day. There was the carriage waiting to take him on his round of visits; and there was Midwinter at his post, pacing to and fro on the drive. "Read that," cried Allan, throwing out the lawyer's letter; "I've written him back a smasher."

He bustled away to the wardrobe to get his coat. There was a wonderful change in him; he felt little or no reluctance to pay the visits now. The pleasurable excitement of answering Mr. Darch had put him in a fine aggressive frame of mind for asserting himself in the neighbourhood. "Whatever else they may say of me, they shan't say I was afraid to face them." Heated red-hot with that idea, he seized his hat and gloves, and, hurrying out of the room, met Midwinter in the corridor with the lawyer's letter in his hand.

"Keep up your spirits!" cried Allan, seeing the anxiety in his friend's face, and misinterpreting the motive of it immediately. "If Darch can't be counted on to send us a helping hand into the steward's office, Pedgift can."

"My dear Allan, I was not thinking of that; I was thinking of Mr. Darch's letter. I don't defend this sour-tempered man—but I am afraid we must admit he has some cause for complaint. Pray don't give him another chance of putting you in the wrong. Where is your answer to his letter?"

"Gone!" replied Allan; "I always strike while the iron's hot—a word and a blow, and the blow first, that's my way. Don't, there's a dear good fellow, don't fidget about the steward's books and the rent-day. Here! here's a bunch of keys they gave me last night: one of them opens the room where the steward's books are; go in and read them till I come back. I give you my sacred word of honour I'll settle it all with Pedgift before you see me again."

"One moment," interposed Midwinter, stopping him resolutely on his way out to the carriage. "I say nothing against Mr. Pedgift's fitness to possess your confidence, for I know nothing to justify me in distrusting him. But he has not introduced himself to your notice in a very delicate way; and he has not acknowledged (what is quite clear to my mind) that he knew of Mr. Darch's unfriendly feeling towards you when he wrote. Wait a little before you go to this stranger; wait till we can talk it over together to-night."

"Wait!" replied Allan. "Haven't I told you that I always strike while the iron's hot? Trust my eye for character, old boy; I'll look Pedgift through and through, and act accordingly. Don't keep me any longer, for heaven's sake. I'm in a fine humour for tackling the resident gentry; and if I don't go at once, I'm afraid it may wear off."

With that excellent reason for being in a hurry, Allan boisterously broke away. Before it was possible to stop him again, he had jumped into the carriage and had left the house.

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#### CHAPTER IV.

##### THE MARCH OF EVENTS.

MIDWINTER's face darkened when the last trace of the carriage had disappeared from view. "I have done my best," he said, as he turned back gloomily into the house. "If Mr. Brock himself were here, Mr. Brock could do no more!"

He looked at the bunch of keys which Allan had thrust into his hand, and a sudden longing to put himself to the test over the steward's books took possession of his sensitive self-tormenting nature. Inquiring his way to the room in which the various moveables of the steward's office had been provisionally placed, after the letting of the cottage, he sat down at the desk, and tried how his own unaided capacity would guide him through the business records of the Thorpe-Ambrose estate. The result exposed his own ignorance unanswerably before his own eyes. The Ledgers bewildered him; the Leases, the Plans, and even the Correspondence itself, might have been written, for all he could understand of them, in an unknown tongue. His memory reverted bitterly as he left the room again to his two years' solitary self-instruction in the Shrewsbury bookseller's shop. "If I could only have worked at a business!" he thought. "If

I could only have known that the company of Poets and Philosophers was company too high for a vagabond like me!"

He sat down alone in the great hall; the silence of it fell heavier and heavier on his sinking spirits; the beauty of it exasperated him, like an insult from a purse-proud man. "Curse the place!" he said, snatching up his hat and stick. "I like the bleakest hill-side I ever slept on, better than I like this house!"

He impatiently descended the doorsteps, and stopped on the drive, considering by which direction he should leave the park for the country beyond. If he followed the road taken by the carriage, he might risk unsettling Allan by accidentally meeting him in the town. If he went out by the back gate, he knew his own nature well enough to doubt his ability to pass the room of the dream without entering it again. But one other way remained—the way which he had taken, and then abandoned again, in the morning. There was no fear of disturbing Allan and the major's daughter now. Without further hesitation, Midwinter set forth through the gardens to explore the open country on that side of the estate.

Thrown off its balance by the events of the day, his mind was full of that sourly-savage resistance to the inevitable self-assertion of wealth, so amiably deplored by the prosperous and the rich; so bitterly familiar to the unfortunate and the poor. "The heather-bell costs nothing!" he thought, looking contemptuously at the masses of rare and beautiful flowers that surrounded him; "and the buttercups and daisies are as bright as the best of you!" He followed the artfully-contrived ovals and squares of the Italian garden, with a vagabond indifference to the symmetry of their construction and the ingenuity of their design. "How many pounds a foot did *you* cost?" he said, looking back with scornful eyes at the last path as he left it. "Wind away ever high and low like the sheep-walk on the mountain-side, if you can!"

He entered the shrubbery which Allan had entered before him; crossed the paddock and the rustic bridge beyond; and reached the major's cottage. His ready mind seized the right conclusion, at the first sight of it; and he stopped before the garden gate, to look at the trim little residence which would never have been empty, and would never have been let, but for Allan's ill-advised resolution to force the steward's situation on his friend.

The summer afternoon was warm; the summer air was faint and still. On the upper and the lower floor of the cottage the windows were all open. From one of them, on the upper story, the sound of voices was startlingly audible in the quiet of the park, as Midwinter paused on the outer side of the garden enclosure. The voice of a woman, harsh, high, and angrily complaining—a voice with all the freshness and the melody gone, and with nothing but the hard power of it left—was the discordantly predominant sound. With it, from moment to moment, there mingled the deeper and quieter tones, soothing and compassionate, of the voice of a man. Although the distance was too great to allow Midwinter to dis-

tinguish the words that were spoken, he felt the impropriety of remaining within hearing of the voices, and at once stepped forward to continue his walk. At the same moment, the face of a young girl (easily recognizable as the face of Miss Milroy, from Allan's description of her) appeared at the open window of the room. In spite of himself, Midwinter paused to look at her. The expression of the bright young face, which had smiled so prettily on Allan, was weary and disheartened. After looking out absently over the park she suddenly turned her head back into the room; her attention having been apparently struck by something that had just been said in it. "Oh, mamma, mamma," she exclaimed indignantly, "how *can* you say such things!" The words were spoken close to the window; they reached Midwinter's ears, and hurried him away before he heard more. But the self-disclosure of Major Milroy's domestic position had not reached its end yet. As Midwinter turned the corner of the garden fence, a tradesman's boy was handing a parcel in at the wicket gate to the woman servant. "Well," said the boy, with the irrepressible impudence of his class, "how is the missus?" The woman lifted her hand to box his ears. "How is the missus?" she repeated, with an angry toss of her head as the boy ran off. "If it would only please God to take the missus, it would be a blessing to everybody in the house."

No such ill-omened shadow as this had passed over the bright domestic picture of the inhabitants of the cottage, which Allan's enthusiasm had painted for the contemplation of his friend. It was plain that the secret of the tenants had been kept from the landlord so far. Five minutes more of walking brought Midwinter to the park gates. "Am I fated to see nothing and hear nothing to-day which can give me heart and hope for the future?" he thought, as he angrily swung back the lodge gate. "Even the people Allan has let the cottage to, are people whose lives are embittered by a household misery which it is *my* misfortune to have found out!"

He took the first road that lay before him, and walked on, noticing little, immersed in his own thoughts. More than an hour passed before the necessity of turning back entered his mind. As soon as the idea occurred to him, he consulted his watch, and determined to retrace his steps, so as to be at the house in good time to meet Allan on his return. Ten minutes of walking brought him back to a point at which three roads met; and one moment's observation of the place satisfied him that he had entirely failed to notice, at the time, by which of the three roads he had advanced. No sign-post was to be seen; the country on either side was lonely and flat, intersected by broad drains and ditches. Cattle were grazing here and there; and a windmill rose in the distance above the pollard willows that fringed the low horizon. But not a house was to be seen, and not a human creature appeared on the visible perspective of any one of the three roads. Midwinter glanced back in the only direction left to look at—the direction of the road along which he had just been walking. There, to his relief, was the figure of a man, rapidly advancing towards him, of whom he could ask his way.

The figure came on, clad from head to foot in dreary black—a moving blot on the brilliant white surface of the sun-brightened road. He was a lean, elderly, miserably respectable man. He wore a poor old black dress-coat, and a cheap brown wig, which made no pretence of being his own natural hair. Short black trousers clung like attached old servants round his wizened legs; and rusty black gaiters hid all they could of his knobbed ungainly feet. Black crape added its mite to the decayed and dingy wretchedness of his old beaver hat; black mohair in the obsolete form of a stock, drearily encircled his neck and rose as high as his haggard jaws. The one morsel of colour he carried about him, was a lawyer's bag of blue serge as lean and limp as himself. The one attractive feature in his clean-shaven, weary old face, was a neat set of teeth—teeth (as honest as his wig), which said plainly to all inquiring eyes, "We pass our nights on his looking-glass, and our days in his mouth."

All the little blood in the man's body faintly reddened his fleshless cheeks as Midwinter advanced to meet him, and asked the way to Thorpe-Ambrose. His weak watery eyes looked hither and thither in a bewildered painful to see. If he had met with a lion instead of a man, and if the few words addressed to him had been words expressing a threat instead of a question, he could hardly have looked more confused and alarmed than he looked now. For the first time in his life, Midwinter saw his own shy uneasiness in the presence of strangers reflected, with tenfold intensity of nervous suffering, in the face of another man—and that man old enough to be his father.

"Which do you please to mean, sir—the Town or the House? I beg your pardon for asking, but they both go by the same name in these parts."

He spoke with a timid gentleness of tone, an ingratiatory smile, and an anxious courtesy of manner, all distressingly suggestive of his being accustomed to receive rough answers in exchange for his own politeness, from the persons whom he habitually addressed.

"I was not aware that both the House and the Town went by the same name," said Midwinter: "I meant the House." He instinctively conquered his own shyness as he answered in those words; speaking with a cordiality of manner which was very rare with him in his intercourse with strangers.

The man of miserable-respectability seemed to feel the warm return of his own politeness gratefully: he brightened and took a little courage. His lean forefinger pointed eagerly to the right road. "That way, sir," he said, "and when you come to two roads next, please take the left one of the two. I am sorry I have business the other way—I mean in the town. I should have been happy to go with you, and show you. Fine summer weather, sir, for walking? You can't miss your way if you keep to the left. Oh, don't mention it! I'm afraid I have detained you, sir. I wish you a pleasant walk back, and—good morning."

By the time he had made an end of speaking (under an impression

apparently that the more he talked the more polite he would be) he had lost his courage again. He darted away down his own road, as if Midwinter's attempts to thank him, involved a series of trials too terrible to confront. In two minutes more, his black retreating figure had lessened in the distance till it looked again, what it had once looked already, a moving blot on the brilliant white surface of the sun-brightened road.

The man ran strangely in Midwinter's thoughts while he took his way back to the house. He was at a loss to account for it. It never occurred to him that he might have been insensibly reminded of himself, when he saw the plain traces of past misfortune and present nervous suffering in the poor wretch's face. He blindly resented his own perverse interest in this chance foot-passenger on the high road, as he had resented all else that had happened to him since the beginning of the day. "Have I made another unlucky discovery?" he asked himself impatiently. "Shall I see this man again, I wonder? who can he be?"

Time was to answer both those questions before many days more had passed over the inquirer's head.

Allan had not returned when Midwinter reached the house. Nothing had happened but the arrival of a message of apology from the cottage. "Major Milroy's compliments, and he was sorry that Mrs. Milroy's illness would prevent his receiving Mr. Armadale that day." It was plain that Mrs. Milroy's occasional fits of suffering (or of ill-temper) created no mere transitory disturbance of the tranquillity of the household. Drawing this natural inference, after what he had himself heard at the cottage nearly three hours since, Midwinter withdrew into the library to wait patiently among the books until his friend came back.

It was past six o'clock, when the well-known hearty voice was heard again in the hall. Allan burst into the library, in a state of irrepressible excitement, and pushed Midwinter back unceremoniously into the chair from which he was just rising, before he could utter a word.

"Here's a riddle for you, old boy!" cried Allan. "Why am I like the resident manager of the Augean stable, before Hercules was called in to sweep the litter out? Because I have had my place to keep up, and I've gone and made an infernal mess of it! Why don't you laugh? By George, he doesn't see the point! Let's try again. Why am I like the resident manager? —"

"For God's sake, Allan, be serious for a moment!" interposed Midwinter. "You don't know how anxious I am to hear if you have recovered the good opinion of your neighbours."

"That's just what the riddle was intended to tell you!" rejoined Allan. "But if you will have it in so many words, my own impression is that you would have done better not to disturb me under that tree in the park. I've been calculating it to a nicety, and I beg to inform you that I have sunk exactly three degrees lower in the estimation of the resident gentry since I had the pleasure of seeing you last."



"You *will* have your joke out," said Midwinter, bitterly. "Well, if I can't laugh, I can wait."

"My dear fellow, I'm not joking; I really mean what I say. You shall hear what happened—you shall have a report in full of my first visit. It will do, I can promise you, as a sample for all the rest. Mind this, in the first place, I've gone wrong, with the best possible intentions. When I started for these visits, I own I was angry with that old brute of a lawyer, and I certainly had a notion of carrying things with a high hand. But it wore off somehow on the road; and the first family I called on, I went in as I tell you with the best possible intentions. Oh dear, dear! there was the same spick-and-span reception room for me to wait in,—with the neat conservatory beyond, which I saw again and again and again at every other house I went to afterwards. There was the same choice selection of books for me to look at—a religious book, a book about the Duke of Wellington, a book about sporting, and a book about nothing in particular, beautifully illustrated with pictures. Down came papa with his nice white hair, and mamma with her nice lace cap; down came young Mister with the pink face and the straw-coloured whiskers, and young Miss with the plump cheeks and the large petticoats. Don't suppose there was the least unfriendliness on my side; I always began with them in the same way—I insisted on shaking hands all round. That staggered them to begin with. When I came to the sore subject next—the subject of the public reception—I give you my word of honour I took the greatest possible pains with my apologies. It hadn't the slightest effect; they let my apologies in at one ear and out at the other, and then waited to hear more. Some men would have been disheartened: I tried another way with them; I addressed myself to the master of the house, and put it pleasantly next. 'The fact is,' I said, 'I wanted to escape the speechifying—my getting up, you know, and telling you to your face, you're the best of men, and I beg to propose your health; and you're getting up, and telling me to my face, I'm the best of men, and you beg to thank me; and so on, man after man, praising each other and pestering each other all round the table.' That's how I put it, in an easy, light-handed, convincing sort of way. Do you think any of them took it in the same friendly spirit? Not one! It's my belief they had got their speeches ready for the reception, with the flags and the flowers, and that they're secretly angry with me for stopping their open mouths just as they were ready to begin. Anyway, whenever we came to the matter of the speechifying (whether they touched it first or I), down I fell in their estimation the first of those three steps I told you of just now. Don't suppose I made no efforts to get up again! I made desperate efforts. I found they were all anxious to know what sort of life I had led before I came in for the Thorpe-Ambrose property, and I did my best to satisfy them. And what came of that, do you think? Hang me, if I didn't disappoint them for the second time! When they found out that I had actually never been to Eton or Harrow, or Oxford or Cambridge, they were

quite dumb with astonishment. I fancy they thought me a sort of outlaw. At any rate, they all froze up again—and down I fell the second step in their estimation. Never mind! I wasn't to be beaten; I had promised you to do my best, and I did it. I tried cheerful small-talk about the neighbourhood next. The women said nothing in particular; the men, to my unutterable astonishment, all began to condole with me. I shouldn't be able to find a pack of hounds, they said, within twenty miles of my house; and they thought it only right to prepare me for the disgracefully careless manner in which the Thorpe-Ambrose covers had been preserved. I let them go on condoling with me, and then what do you think I did? I put my foot in it again. 'Oh, don't take that to heart!' I said; 'I don't care two straws about hunting or shooting, either. When I meet with a bird in my walk, I can't for the life of me feel eager to kill it—I rather like to see the bird flying about and enjoying itself.' You should have seen their faces! They had thought me a sort of outlaw before; now they evidently thought me mad. Dead silence fell upon them all; and down I tumbled the third step in the general estimation. It was just the same at the next house, and the next, and the next. The devil possessed us all, I think. 'It *would* come out, now in one way and now in another, that I couldn't make speeches—that I had been brought up without a university education—and that I could enjoy a ride on horse-back without galloping after a wretched stinking fox or a poor distracted little hare. Those three unlucky defects of mine are not excused, it seems, in a country gentleman (especially when he has dodged a public reception to begin with). I think I got on best, upon the whole, with the wives and daughters. The women and I always fell, sooner or later, on the subject of Mrs. Blanchard and her niece. We invariably agreed that they had done wisely in going to Florence; and the only reason we had to give for our opinion was—that we thought their minds would be benefited after their sad bereavement, by the contemplation of the masterpieces of Italian Art. Every one of the ladies—I solemnly declare it—at every house I went to, came sooner or later to Mrs. and Miss Blanchard's bereavement, and the masterpieces of Italian Art. What we should have done without that bright idea to help us, I really don't know. The one pleasant thing at any of the visits was when we all shook our heads together, and declared that the masterpieces would console them. As for the rest of it, there's only one thing more to be said. What I might be in other places I don't know—I'm the wrong man in the wrong place here. Let me muddle on for the future in my own way, with my own few friends; and ask me anything else in the world, as long as you don't ask me to make any more calls on my neighbours."

With that characteristic request, Allan's report of his exploring expedition among the resident gentry came to a close. For a moment Midwinter remained silent. He had allowed Allan to run on from first to last without uttering a word on his side. The disastrous result of the visits—coming after what had happened earlier in the day; and threat-

ening Allan, as it did, with exclusion from all local sympathies at the very outset of his local career—had broken down Midwinter's power of resisting the stealthily-depressing influence of his own superstition. It was with an effort that he now looked up at Allan; it was with an effort that he roused himself to answer.

"It shall be as you wish," he said, quietly. "I am sorry for what has happened—but I am not the less obliged to you, Allan, for having done what I asked you."

His head sank on his breast; and the fatalist resignation which had once already quieted him on board the Wreck, now quieted him again. "What *must* be, *will* be," he thought once more. "What have I to do with the future, and what has he?"

"Cheer up!" said Allan. "*Your* affairs are in a thriving condition at any rate. I paid one pleasant visit in the town, which I haven't told you of yet. I've seen Pedgift, and Pedgift's son, who helps him in the office. They're the two jolliest lawyers I ever met with in my life—and what's more, they can produce the very man you want to teach you the steward's business."

Midwinter looked up quickly. Distrust of Allan's discovery was plainly written in his face already; but he said nothing.

"I thought of you," Allan proceeded, "as soon as the two Pedgifts and I had had a glass of wine all round to drink to our friendly connection. The finest sherry I ever tasted in my life; I've ordered some of the same—but that's not the question just now. In two words I told these worthy fellows your difficulty, and in two seconds old Pedgift understood all about it. 'I have got the man in my office,' he said, 'and before the audit-day comes, I'll place him with the greatest pleasure at your friend's disposal.'"

At this last announcement, Midwinter's distrust found its expression in words. He questioned Allan unsparingly. The man's name, it appeared, was Bashwood. He had been some time (how long, Allan could not remember) in Mr. Pedgift's service. He had been previously steward to a Norfolk gentleman (name forgotten) in the westward district of the county. He had lost the steward's place, through some domestic trouble, in connection with his son, the precise nature of which Allan was not able to specify. Pedgift vouched for him, and Pedgift would send him to Thorpe-Ambrose two or three days before the rent-day dinner. He could not be spared, for office reasons, before that time. There was no need to fidget about it; Pedgift laughed at the idea of there being any difficulty with the tenants. Two or three days' work over the steward's books with a man to help Midwinter who practically understood that sort of thing, would put him all right for the audit; and the other business would keep till afterwards.

"Have you seen this Mr. Bashwood yourself, Allan?" asked Midwinter, still obstinately on his guard.

"No," replied Allan; "he was out—out with the bag, as young

Pedgift called it. They tell me he's a decent elderly man. A little broken by his troubles, and a little apt to be nervous and confused in his manner with strangers; but thoroughly competent and thoroughly to be depended on—those are Pedgift's own words."

Midwinter paused and considered a little, with a new interest in the subject. The strange man whom he had just heard described, and the strange man of whom he had asked his way where the three roads met, were remarkably like each other. Was this another link in the fast-lengthening chain of events? Midwinter grew doubly determined to be careful, as the bare doubt that it might be so passed through his mind.

"When Mr. Bashwood comes," he said, "will you let me see him, and speak to him, before anything definite is done?"

"Of course I will!" rejoined Allan. He stopped and looked at his watch. "And I'll tell you what I'll do for you, old boy, in the meantime," he added; "I'll introduce you to the prettiest girl in Norfolk! There's just time to run over to the cottage before dinner. Come along, and be introduced to Miss Milroy."

"You can't introduce me to Miss Milroy to-day," replied Midwinter; and he repeated the message of apology which had been brought from the major that afternoon. Allan was surprised and disappointed; but he was not to be foiled in his resolution to advance himself in the good graces of the inhabitants of the cottage. After a little consideration he hit on a means of turning the present adverse circumstances to good account. "I'll show a proper anxiety for Mrs. Milroy's recovery," he said gravely. "I'll send her a basket of strawberries, with my best respects, to-morrow morning."

Nothing more happened to mark the end of that first day in the new house.

The one noticeable event of the next day was another disclosure of Mrs. Milroy's infirmity of temper. Half-an-hour after Allan's basket of strawberries had been delivered at the cottage, it was returned to him intact (by the hands of the invalid lady's nurse), with a short and sharp message, shortly and sharply delivered. "Mrs. Milroy's compliments, and thanks. Strawberries invariably disagreed with her." If this curiously petulant acknowledgment of an act of politeness was intended to irritate Allan, it failed entirely in accomplishing its object. Instead of being offended with the mother, he sympathized with the daughter. "Poor little thing," was all he said, "she must have a hard life of it with such a mother as that!"

He called at the cottage himself later in the day, but Miss Milroy was not to be seen; she was engaged upstairs. The major received his visitor in his working apron—far more deeply immersed in his wonderful clock, and far less readily accessible to outer influences than Allan had seen him at their first interview. His manner was as kind as before; but not a word more could be extracted from him on the subject of his wife, than that Mrs. Milroy "had not improved since yesterday."

The two next days passed quietly and uneventfully. Allan persisted in making his inquiries at the cottage; but all he saw of the major's daughter was a glimpse of her on one occasion, at a window on the bed-room floor. Nothing more was heard from Mr. Pedgift; and Mr. Bashwood's appearance was still delayed. Midwinter declined to move in the matter until time enough had passed to allow of his first hearing from Mr. Brock, in answer to the letter which he had addressed to the rector on the night of his arrival at Thorpe-Ambrose. He was unusually silent and quiet, and passed most of his hours in the library among the books. The time wore on wearily. The resident gentry acknowledged Allan's visit by formally leaving their cards. Nobody came near the house afterwards; the weather was monotonously fine. Allan grew a little restless and dissatisfied. He began to resent Mrs. Milroy's illness; he began to think regretfully of his deserted yacht.

The next day—the twentieth—brought some news with it from the outer world. A message was delivered from Mr. Pedgift, announcing that his clerk, Mr. Bashwood, would personally present himself at Thorpe-Ambrose on the following day; and a letter in answer to Midwinter was received from Mr. Brock.

The letter was dated the 18th, and the news which it contained raised, not Allan's spirits only, but Midwinter's as well. On the day on which he wrote, Mr. Brock announced that he was about to journey to London; having been summoned thither on business connected with the interests of a sick relative, to whom he stood in the position of trustee. The business completed, he had good hope of finding one or other of his clerical friends in the metropolis who would be able and willing to do duty for him at the rectory; and, in that case, he trusted to travel on from London to Thorpe-Ambrose in a week's time or less. Under these circumstances, he would leave the majority of the subjects on which Midwinter had written to him to be discussed when they met. But as time might be of importance, in relation to the stewardship of the Thorpe-Ambrose estate, he would say at once that he saw no reason why Midwinter should not apply his mind to learning the steward's duties, and should not succeed in rendering himself invaluable serviceable in that way to the interests of his friend.

Leaving Midwinter reading and re-reading the rector's cheering letter, as if he was bent on getting every sentence in it by heart, Allan went out rather earlier than usual, to make his daily inquiry at the cottage—or, in plainer words, to make a fourth attempt at improving his acquaintance with Miss Milroy. The day had begun encouragingly, and encouragingly it seemed destined to go on. When Allan turned the corner of the second shrubbery, and entered the little paddock where he and the major's daughter had first met, there was Miss Milroy herself loitering to and fro on the grass, to all appearance on the watch for somebody.

She gave a little start when Allan appeared, and came forward without hesitation to meet him. She was not in her best looks. Her rosy com-

plexion had suffered under confinement to the house, and a marked expression of embarrassment clouded her pretty face.

"I hardly know how to confess it, Mr. Armadale," she said, speaking eagerly, before Allan could utter a word, "but I certainly ventured here this morning, in the hope of meeting with you. I have been very much distressed—I have only just heard, by accident, of the manner in which mamma received the present of fruit you so kindly sent to her. Will you try to excuse her? She has been miserably ill for years, and she is not always quite herself. After your being so very very kind to me (and to papa), I really could not help stealing out here in the hope of seeing you, and telling you how sorry I was. Pray forgive and forget, Mr. Armadale—pray do!" Her voice faltered over the last words, and, in her eagerness to make her mother's peace with him, she laid her hand on his arm.

Allan was himself a little confused. Her earnestness took him by surprise, and her evident conviction that he had been offended, honestly distressed him. Not knowing what else to do, he followed his instincts, and possessed himself of her hand to begin with.

"My dear Miss Milroy, if you say a word more you will distress me next," he rejoined, unconsciously pressing her hand closer and closer, in the embarrassment of the moment. "I never was in the least offended; I made allowances—upon my honour I did—for poor Mrs. Milroy's illness. Offended!" cried Allan, reverting energetically to the old complimentary strain. "I should like to have my basket of fruit sent back every day—if I could only be sure of its bringing you out into the paddock the first thing in the morning."

Some of Miss Milroy's missing colour began to appear again in her cheeks. "Oh, Mr. Armadale, there is really no end to your kindness," she said; "you don't know how you relieve me!" She paused; her spirits rallied with as happy a readiness of recovery as if they had been the spirits of a child; and her native brightness of temper sparkled again in her eyes, as she looked up, shyly smiling in Allan's face. "Don't you think," she asked demurely, "that it is almost time now to let go of my hand?"

Their eyes met. Allan followed his instincts for the second time. Instead of releasing her hand, he lifted it to his lips and kissed it. All the missing tints of the rosier sort returned to Miss Milroy's complexion on the instant. She snatched away her hand as if Allan had burnt it.

"I'm sure *that's* wrong, Mr. Armadale," she said—and turned her head aside quickly, for she was smiling in spite of herself.

"I meant it as an apology for—for holding your hand too long," stammered Allan. "An apology can't be wrong—can it?"

There are occasions (though not many) when the female mind accurately appreciates an appeal to the force of pure reason. This was one of the occasions. An abstract proposition had been presented to Miss Milroy, and Miss Milroy was convinced. If it was meant as an apology, that (she admitted) made all the difference. "I only hope," said the little coquette,



looking at him slyly, "you're not misleading me. Not that it matters much now," she added, with a serious shake of her head. "If we *have* committed any improprieties, Mr. Armadale, we are not likely to have the opportunity of committing many more."

"You're not going away?" exclaimed Allan in great alarm.

"Worse than that, Mr. Armadale. My new governess is coming."

"Coming?" repeated Allan. "Coming already?"

"As good as coming, I ought to have said—only I didn't know you wished me to be so very particular. We got the answers to the advertisements this morning. Papa and I opened them and read them together half an hour ago—and we both picked out the same letter from all the rest. I picked it out, because it was so prettily expressed; and papa picked it out, because the terms were so reasonable. He is going to send the letter up to grandmamma in London, by to-day's post; and if she finds everything satisfactory, on inquiry, the governess is to be engaged. You don't know how dreadfully nervous I am getting about it already—a strange governess is such an awful prospect. But it is not quite so bad as going to school; and I have great hopes of this new lady, because she writes such a nice letter! As I said to papa, it almost reconciles me to her horrid, unromantic name."

"What is her name?" asked Allan. "Brown? Grubb? Scraggs? Anything of that sort?"

"Hush! hush! Nothing quite so horrible as that. Her name is Gwilt. Dreadfully unpoetical, isn't it? Her reference must be a respectable person, though; for she lives in the same part of London as grandmamma. Stop, Mr. Armadale! we are going the wrong way. No; I can't wait to look at those lovely flowers of yours this morning—and (many thanks) I can't accept your arm. I have stayed here too long already. Papa is waiting for his breakfast; and I must run back every step of the way. Thank you for making those kind allowances for mamma; thank you again and again—and good-by!"

"Won't you shake hands?" asked Allan.

She gave him her hand. "No more apologies, if you please, Mr. Armadale," she said saucily. Once more their eyes met; and once more the plump dimpled little hand found its way to Allan's lips. "It isn't an apology this time!" cried Allan, precipitately defending himself. "It's—it's a mark of respect."

She started back a few steps, and burst out laughing. "You won't find me in your grounds again, Mr. Armadale," she said merrily, "till I have got Miss Gwilt to take care of me!" With that farewell, she gathered up her skirts, and ran back across the paddock at the top of her speed.

Allan stood watching her in speechless admiration till she was out of sight. His second interview with Miss Milroy had produced an extraordinary effect on him. For the first time since he had become the master of Thorpe-Ambrose, he was absorbed in serious consideration of what he owed to his new position in life. "The question is," pondered

Allan, "whether I hadn't better set myself right with my neighbours by becoming a married man? I'll take the day to consider; and if I keep in the same mind about it, I'll consult Midwinter to-morrow morning."

When the morning came, and when Allan descended to the breakfast-room, resolute to consult his friend on the obligations that he owed to his neighbours in general, and to Miss Milroy in particular, no Midwinter was to be seen. On making inquiry it appeared that he had been observed in the hall; that he had taken from the table a letter which the morning's post had brought to him; and that he had gone back immediately to his own room. Allan at once ascended the stairs again, and knocked at his friend's door.

"May I come in?" he asked.

"Not just now," was the answer.

"You have got a letter, haven't you?" persisted Allan. "Any bad news? Anything wrong?"

"Nothing. I'm not very well this morning. Don't wait breakfast for me; I'll come down as soon as I can."

No more was said on either side. Allan returned to the breakfast-room a little disappointed. He had set his heart on rushing headlong into his consultation with Midwinter, and here was the consultation indefinitely delayed. "What an odd fellow he is!" thought Allan. "What on earth can he be doing, locked in there by himself?"

He was doing nothing. He was sitting by the window, with the letter which had reached him that morning, open in his hand. The handwriting was Mr. Brock's, and the words written were these:—

"My dear Midwinter,—I have literally only two minutes before post-time to tell you that I have just met (in Kensington Gardens) with the woman, whom we both only know, thus far, as the woman with the red Paisley shawl. I have traced her and her companion (a respectable-looking elderly lady) to their residence—after having distinctly heard Allan's name mentioned between them. Depend on my not losing sight of the woman until I am satisfied that she means no mischief at Thorpe-Ambrose; and expect to hear from me again as soon as I know how this strange discovery is to end.—Very truly yours, DECIMUS BROCK."

After reading the letter for the second time Midwinter folded it up thoughtfully, and placed it in his pocket-book, side by side with the manuscript narrative of Allan's dream.

"Your discovery will not end with *you*, Mr. Brock," he said. "Do what you will with the woman, when the time comes the woman will be here."

He looked for a moment in the glass—saw that he had composed himself sufficiently to meet Allan's eye—and went downstairs to take his place at the breakfast table.

## Nurses Wanted.

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THERE must have been many people who thought, on glancing at the results of the last Census, that our countrywomen greatly need to have their attention drawn to certain facts which nearly concern them: and some recent incidents have confirmed this belief. Such facts as the following should not be so new or strange as we imagine they will be to such Englishwomen as will read what I am writing.

It appears that the women of our country, above twenty years of age, who earn their own maintenance, are numbered by millions. One-third of the whole number are independent workers; that is, they are reckoned over and above the shopkeepers' wives and farmers' daughters, and shoemakers' and tailors' wives and children who take their share in the family calling. One third of our countrywomen over twenty years old, have an occupation of their own, and earn a subsistence for themselves, as men do. Moreover, of the unmarried women above the same age, three-fourths work for their living in this way: and when the widows are included with the spinsters, no less than four-fifths of the whole number are found to be of the self-supporting class. It seems to me that facts like these ought to stop some talk, and to check some feelings which abound far too much among us. Any pretence of horror or disgust at women having to work, is mere affectation in a country and time when half the women must work in order to live, and when one-third of them must be independent workers. Beside the magnitude of such facts, the pride of the minority—and especially of the women who really are unoccupied—appears very small indeed. Even the anxious solicitude of fathers, who dread the very notion of any express and definite occupation for their daughters, looks like a mistake when we learn how small is the proportion of women who can be genteel,—if gentility consists in doing nothing appreciable. The result of such anxiety on the part of parents is too often that, on their death, their daughters have to try, in a feeble unprepared way, to do something for a living; or, if they are left independent, to wear out a maiden life with such spirits as they may—devoid as it is of natural objects and interests, in which the wives and mothers on the one hand, and the working women on the other, have the advantage of them. In our time, and under present circumstances, the women of the United Kingdom are more numerous than the men; and the disproportion is continually on the increase, from emigration and other causes. Each census accordingly exhibits a growing proportion of female workers, and especially of independent bread-winners; and while this goes on, the forlornness of female idleness, and the folly of pride in the gentility of idleness, will become more and more striking.

"What are all these workers doing?" it will be asked; "because it still seems the most difficult thing in the world to provide educated women, or middle-class women whether educated or not, with the means of self-support. We are heart-sick of hearing of those wretched governesses, who, after an irksome and weary life of work, are destitute in their old age: some blind, some deaf, some paralytic, and a multitude diseased and worn out; and scarcely one in a hundred who has earned enough to live upon in the barest way; there is nothing in this to reconcile one to the thought of Englishwomen having to work more and more. And here are the Social Science reformers trying to open new employments to educated women. Perhaps they are right; perhaps somebody must do it, if there are more and more women who must support themselves; but, judging by the poor governesses, it is a dismal task and a dreary prospect."

This has hitherto been true enough, and it would be true still if gentlewomen must be governesses because they are poor; or if they must spend their lives in trying to teach without having ever been educated themselves. The prospect would be dreary enough if women's work was for ever to be too ill-paid to admit of a provision for infirmity and old age; and if the labour of educated or middle-class women was to be the worst paid of all. Let us see what the workers are doing, from the genteel of poor ladies down to the maid-of-all-work and the factory girl.

We find it roughly set down that one-fourth of our working countrywomen are engaged in business of some respectable sort, established on their own means: and these live by profits. Another fourth are employed in manufactures or agriculture,—some getting good wages, and others very low ones. Another fourth are actually engaged in the preparation of dress,—in the making, mending, and washing of apparel. The remaining fourth are in service. The dress-preparers are half a million, and the female servants are somewhat more, viz. between six and seven hundred thousand.

"Where, then, are the governesses?" it will be asked. They are ranked in the last census with the professional classes, and their number is set down as 24,770. This is probably less than many would expect from the proportion always out of work, or giving their toil for a bare living; and when it is compared with the quarter million of milliners and dressmakers, and even with the humbler sempstresses, it seems as if so moderate a number ought to be able to earn a comfortable subsistence. I can only say briefly here, that such would be the prospect, doubtless, if the candidates were, as a body, better qualified, and less eager to work for anything or nothing beyond daily bread. While the mere need of bread drives any considerable proportion of them into the profession unprepared, they will live in poverty and degradation; and die in destitution.

All this looks very miserable; and it does not spend the matter to think of the fate of women in other occupations. Dairywomen and field-labourers get worn out at an early age, and can lay by little or nothing. London was shocked when told by Prince Albert how large a

proportion of female servants die in the workhouse. The fate of the needlewomen, now that their trade is passing from them, is too familiar to us; and so is that of the dressmaker. The women engaged in some kinds of manufacture earn a good deal more; but they are not usually qualified to handle their money wisely. They waste their pay sadly, and end by having nothing when they want it most. Are we then to suppose that no women but the capitalists can earn a comfortable independence by their own industry? Must we stop at the class of women who have shops, and farms, and keep inns and lodging-houses, and conduct some manufacture? Are these all?

Here there always arises a cry about the enormous amounts of money gained by great actresses and singers, and by a few authors. The fact is indisputable: but the number is too small to render any comparison possible. Our maids-of-all-work are little under half a million in number; and women engaged in literature were at the last census 185; and of these few, a large proportion have probably no more money laid by than the maids-of-all-work. As for the actresses and opera-singers, the rich ones are even more scarce than the authoresses who earn their thousands upon thousands.

What can be more disheartening than all this looks! Everybody seems to feel it so. "Here," says one and another, "are half our countrywomen working, and so many more pressing for subsistence on any terms that we do not know which way to turn on their behalf. We discover new occupations for them; but meantime some old one is dying out; and we always have some helpless crowd on our hands, just when we had opened a fresh road into the industrial field. As soon as we have set one class telegraphing, or law-copying, or engraving, or printing, or book-keeping, we have ten times the number cast adrift by the sewing-machine! And the whole prospect is so poor! the pay so low! and so little choice of occupation for women, at best! All the employments *natural* to women were overstocked long ago; we are now trying an experiment with the *admissible* ones,—hampered and vexed at every step by the jealousy and ill-will of men, who are as dead set against women doing anything but sewing as the Coventry men who would not let their wives and daughters touch ribbons first or watches afterwards; or the Staffordshire potters who will not permit the female workers to paint with the *rest* (for steadying the hand) which is used by the stronger sex. It really seems as if no branch of female industry is ever to be so paid as that women can be independent for life; and the whole thing is so disheartening that one is glad to turn one's mind from it altogether."

Such is the common view among kind-hearted people; and such is the too common disposition to dismiss the whole subject. Who would imagine that all the time there is a vocation for women almost entirely neglected in this country;—an occupation combining the advantages which Adam Smith represents as alternatives—of social repute and pecuniary profit;—an employment undisturbed by any jealousy of men, congenial with all the best instincts of women, universally honoured, and

better paid than any other woman's work, except, as has been said, that of queens and of actresses! Yet those who must know, tell us that so it is: and the very few who at all apprehend the magnitude of the interest to our countrymen, ask what *can* be the meaning of such an apathy as the women of England are showing in regard to such an opportunity as was never offered to them before.

The occupation is NURSING. The opportunity consists in the fact that there is an immediate and urgent demand for many thousands—even tens of thousands—of trained nurses, while hosts of employers are ready to respect and cherish them, and to pay them handsomely; and means of training are open to many more than show any wish to make use of the advantage. "What *can* it mean?" asks one and another. We must see if we can make it out.

In order to do this, I have been looking over circulars of Societies for the benefit of women, programmes of female occupations, sections of the census, treatises on Woman's Mission, and the like; in short, everything bearing on the subject of female industry in this country; and I find nothing whatever about nursing or nurses, beyond a line or two in tables of figures, and a mere passing allusion when the occupations of women are recited. This does seem strange, in days when so much has been preached and printed about "Woman's Mission," and such complaints have been made of the poor remuneration of women's work. It would seem to a simple-minded person that if a mission has been appointed to Woman, it is that of nursing the sick; and that if women desire pecuniary independence they should qualify themselves for the employment which secures it. If it is not so, why is it not?

My own belief is that scarcely anybody in England knows anything whatever about what the state of things is, and what it ought to be. The Schools and Homes for Nurses contain women, and the Hospitals and the medical profession contain men, who know how we stand in regard to the management of the sick; but I can explain the general indifference only by the supposition of an ignorance which conceals the need, and at the same time perverts the whole aspect of the occupation, and gives it no chance with those who might be useful and happy in it. We heard a great deal about it during the Crimean war; and none were more displeased and grieved at the nonsense that was then talked than the devoted women who went to the camps and hospitals in the East, to save life and relieve misery as far as they could. While they were contending with the hardest and most prosaic difficulties, and seeing men die of sheer hunger and dirt, they had little relish for the romancing of the day—for the fervours of enthusiasts who would have gone out as heroines—or for the pictures of their service held up in novels or poems, in which the nun-like nurse finds her lover in a hospital, cures him, and goes off with him, unmindful of all engagements and of all duties voluntarily undertaken. We grew tired of hospital-romancing years ago; and there is really no sign at all of our having since troubled ourselves to inquire what the facts are of



the provision for the nursing of the sick in the United Kingdom. The Nightingale Fund was subscribed—that was one good deed ; it was put into the hands of worthy trustees—and that was another ; but if it was inquired how much interest the public, or any part of the public, takes in the working of the institution, I fear the answer would be very mortifying.

Before the Russian war turned the attention of the country upon the provision for the care of the wounded and sick, the number of professional nurses in Great Britain was 25,466, besides 2,882 midwives. This is little more than one to every thousand of the population. And who were these nurses ? and what was their quality ?

To the best of my belief the qualified nurse, trained in a hospital and regularly taught her business, was a personage scarcely heard of or imagined beyond the precincts of three or four (if so many) religious establishments, where ladies devoted themselves to the work in the conventional spirit : and these were of recent origin. As for the rest, there was the traditional monthly nurse, and her sister of the sick-room—ignorant, gossiping, full of mischievous superstitions and fancies, rapacious, self-indulgent, and too often the foe of patient and doctor, instead of the best friend of both. Where the moral qualities were right, the professional skill was rare (beyond the routine of childbed treatment). There were no means of education for the treatment even of fevers and the commonest maladies, much less of surgical cases ; and in those days the hired nurse was engaged as a help, as another pair of hands, rather than as the great means of immediate alleviation to the sufferer and of the readiest cure. But these superior nurses of their time were few in comparison with the lower sort, whose portraits we have from our novelists, scarcely caricatured even in *Mrs. Gamp*. These abounded in the towns, where their customers were the small shopkeepers, artisans, &c. I fear we may use the present tense in regard to these, as we may about the village nurses throughout the country. Women who cannot do anything else seem to think they may be nurses, as they used to take school-keeping to be their trade. If they are old and wheezy ; if, not being old, they are hard of hearing or have weak eyes, so as to be unfit for service, they seek engagements as nurses, and go the round of the village wives in their confinements, and are called in at the latter stage of all fatal illnesses within five miles. These are the women who help the local “bone-setter” to custom, because “doctors who are very good at physic don’t know anything about the bones.” These are the women who take monstrous liberties with the stomach of the new-born infant, and try a charm in anxious cases, because “if it does no good it will do no harm,” and who give cordials without the doctor’s knowledge, and keep the window shut against his orders, and act upon their own fantastical notions of the interior of the human frame, instead of deferring to his professional wisdom. These two orders of nurses, with the gradations between them, and the nurses employed in the public hospitals, make up the 25,000 recorded in the census of 1851. The odd hundreds would more than account for

the ladies who formed the religious nursing societies of the day. I need hardly explain that the nurses whom we commonly call nursemaids are not included here, though they are in juxtaposition in the census returns. Of the 39,000 of that class of domestic servants, or care-takers of children, nearly half were between the ages of five and twenty. So much the worse for the children! But that sort of nursing has no connection with my present subject.

Within the last dozen years, there has been just so much progress made as to give us a little taste of the comfort of a trained nurse in the most anxious seasons of domestic life, and to make us long for more. We do intensely long for more; but at present it is not to be had. The richest and greatest can no more depend on getting good nursing at need than the humblest; for the demand immeasurably exceeds the supply. There is even, according to the census of 1861, a falling off in the supply, the number (including the midwifery nurses) being 27,618 to the 28,348 of ten years before. The lady Superintendents of the Homes and the managers of the Nightingale Fund are perplexed in the extreme by applications for nurses, on the one hand, which they cannot satisfy, and, on the other, by constant difficulty in getting their number of Sisters and probationers filled up. If every such Home or school of nursing was full, and sent out its members, as they became qualified, to open other Homes and schools; if every hospital in the country afforded the training that is given at St. Thomas's and King's College Hospitals, and if every pupil on leaving became the teacher of a body of nurses, all these supplies together would not meet the needs of the country and its colonies; and yet this primary number, this earliest class of learners, cannot be kept up without difficulty.

The inducements are so great that it seems that they must prevail, if only they could be made known. What would be the lot of a hundred young women, now humble governesses, say, or workers in a millinery house in London, if they were transformed into trained nurses? As governesses they have, perhaps, from ten to twenty pounds a year, for which they do nursemaids' work as well as their own. They are expected to wash and dress the children, and take them out walking, and to mend their clothes, and to keep their drawers and cupboards, and to give them their meals. For all this they get a mere present subsistence; for their pay barely suffices for their dress. They have no position, no social consideration, no enjoyment of society, no respite, and, worst of all, no prospect. The milliner's lot might almost be thought the better of the two, but for the peril to health, and the suffering belonging to bodily ailments. As it is, there is for her, present *malaise*, and a blank and dark future. How is it with the trained nurse? It is true, these are the palmy days of the profession, but it is with these present days that we have to deal; and their brightest features are actual truths at the moment, and sure to remain so for a generation or two at least. It is true, also, that there are varieties of experience, here as everywhere, from varieties of temper and spirit among employers. There are Superintendents and Sisters who expect

too much of the hired working-nurses, and private employers who are selfish, ignorant, and, therefore, tyrannical. But it is not necessary to submit to tyranny and unreasonableness in the present state of the market; and the brighter view is the one which more truly represents the time.

A member of the sisterhood at one of the Homes is told by the Superintendent that she is wanted to go here, there, or somewhere else, where there is illness in the house. It is for them to choose which engagement of several to accept. If it is a smallpox case, the fee is probably double. At all events, the pay is so good that the nurse may confidently reckon on being in a house where her personal comfort will be secured by the usages of the family, and where she will have persons of some education and refinement to deal with. The choice is made at once, and she starts for her destination. She finds herself eagerly looked for and welcomed. Instead of being pushed aside, imposed upon and mortified, like the overworked governess, she finds the whole household waiting, as it were, on her opinion and her advice. Perhaps it is the head of the family who is ill. Wife, children, and servants have done what they could for him; but they are too anxious, too unassured, too inexperienced to judge of things rightly, and to do things well. The trained nurse will guide their judgments and their efforts, and tell them what to think and to do. Before she has been a quarter of an hour in the sick-room, the bed is more comfortable than it has been since the illness began; somehow, the pillow is so placed that the head will lie easy; and the patient says, "Don't move me—let me be:" in a few moments his eyes close, and presently he is asleep. By-and-by, he can take food—in the way she gives it. She knows how to make it, or have it made, and how to administer it without fuss and trouble. And so on, with all the bodily treatment, from the management of painful sores to the relief of nervous or feverish restlessness. Not less important is the relief of mind she has induced. The sick man reposes on her care: he asks without scruple for what he wants; he takes her word for his condition; and has one great danger the less to contend with in his struggle for life. The women of the house are all at her bidding—only too thankful to be told what to do. The physician is heartily glad to see her, and enters into a partnership of confidence and consultation at once. This is a somewhat different position from that of the humble governess or night-working milliner. And this reminds us of the comparative toil.

The trained nurse imposes her own terms for the husbanding of her own health. She is to be spared all the business which can as well be done by servants: she is to have her meals regularly and comfortably, and to take sufficient time for them; and they are to be of such quality as the exhaustion of her work renders necessary. Arrangements are to be made which shall secure her having sleep enough, and at safe intervals; and she must have an hour in the day for going out, to refresh mind and body in the open air. Dressmaker and governess cannot make such terms: but the qualified nurse may and ought. The first consideration,

in everybody's interest, is to keep her in health. Though this is only rational prudence, it will be easily seen how it tends, with everything else, to enhance the social consideration which attends her office.

If there is any hanging back in the reader's mind, at this point, any reluctance to regard the nurse's position as I represent it, it is probably for one of two reasons. All these advantages together will not counter-balance, the reader may say to himself, the painfulness and disagreeableness of the occupation. And again, there is a look of great selfishness in such a picture of the nurse's dignity and importance.

As to the distastefulness of the office,—the same thing is true, in a far more forcible way, of the profession of the surgeon: yet we have surgeons enough, and always shall have. Some of us may feel or fancy that we had rather sweep a crossing than have to operate on the human frame as surgeons must: and if so, we have only to avoid that profession. It would be folly to go further, and wonder that we have surgeons enough, while the fact is before our eyes that surgeons have a pride and pleasure in their occupation—a pride and pleasure always increasing, long after the first trials of nerve have been forgotten, and the very sense of them lost. In the same way, if young women feel that they had rather be household drudges and invalid sempstresses than tend the sick, let them be governesses at ten or twelve pounds a year, or needlewomen in a millinery establishment. But they ought to be aware, not only that every female infant born into the world is a nurse by nature, but that large numbers of those infants grow up with a positive liking for any and all the offices of the sick-room. As one little boy will run out at the back door as the dentist comes in at the front to draw mamma's tooth, while his brother—a predestined surgeon—mounts on a chair to look into mamma's mouth while it is done, so one little girl will turn pale at the sight of blood, while another will positively enjoy binding up a bad cut. Brother or cousin has got a terrible gash in whittling at his model boat; and to prevent mamma being frightened, the wound is washed and bound up on the spot: and the little damsel finds herself wishing that she could be called to other such accidents. She is the predestined nurse. And if the case is not often so clear, my reader has no right to conclude that a sufficient degree of readiness is not common; or that much aptitude and relish may not exist undiscovered till the occasion arises for ascertaining it. A multitude of women may find that they like the work in itself, however little they might have fancied that they should; and, for that matter, it is but too certain that very few have as yet thought of the case at all. I will add that, as the art of nursing advances and becomes diffused, its repulsive features will be continually softened, or will even disappear. Skilled nursing is no more like that of the last generation, or of the lower classes now, than St. Thomas's Hospital is like that at Scutari, when the building was full of stench, and its inmates were without change of linen, and swarming with vermin. Those women who cannot relish the office of inducing and preserving cleanliness and freshness

in the sick-room, and purification in the worst cases of wounds, may at least perceive and admit that this freshness and purity are a great amelioration of the nurse's case, as well as of that of her patient.

As for the appeal to selfishness with which I may be charged, in showing, as I have done, the advantages of the position of the nurse at the present time, my immediate object was to compare the employment with others to which women resort much more abundantly. If women desire social consideration they can have it as nurses, that is all. If they have higher aims, so much the better; they can, in the same career, have their higher satisfaction too. In connection with both his doubts, my reader really should consider a little what the satisfactions of the calling are; and the more carefully from his being so very ready and able to form strong conceptions of the disagreeable part of the work.

It is no small satisfaction to lay the sufferer easily in bed at the outset; and we may say the same of the whole round of reliefs which are at the command of the trained nurse. But what must it be to save life! When an unskilled attendant, even the devoted wife, cannot get food into the mouth, and a ruder hand may even rap at the teeth, and worry away the last remains of strength, the trained nurse may find no difficulty and will cause no fatigue. If, during a critical night, she gives a little nourishment from one five minutes to another, almost expecting that the breath will be gone before the next, is it not a keen pleasure to perceive the breathing improve, to feel the pulse grow steadier, to see the expression of life return to the face, and to carry on the revival till the physician looks at him and says, "He is better; he will do now?" In less extreme cases are there not satisfactions as real, though less exciting? After hours of restlessness, and when the hope of sleep for the patient that night seems vain, it is some comfort to try again; to have the tempting cup or morsel ready in the highest style, to bathe the face and hands, to put hot bottles to the feet at that coldest hour of the twenty-four, and to say a few quiet words which shall set straight the unhinged mind; and if there should be any success, if the warmth should be manifestly stealing through the frame, if the eyes should close before the weary question gets an answer, if the breathing should settle into that of sleep, is not this a pleasure worth having? is not this an employment which has its privilege? Is it not a blessed thing, when there are children down in fever, to see each little face brighten as the nurse comes near, and to observe how trustful and docile they are in her hands, because she knows how to give them ease when no one else can? Is it not a blessing to be able to administer pleasures which the inexperienced dare not allow to the patient, or do not think of—the strong blast of wind in fever (which would cure in fever cases if it could be had steadily), the sunlight in certain states of weakness, the view from the window, and the many fanciful changes which suit the mood of the sick? The way in which a skilled nurse can place pillows, so as to afford the exact relief which the patient did not know how to ask for, is sometimes like magic. To give

this comfort—to prevent bed-sores; to be the first to detect the form of the secondary illness after fever, so as to give the physician the earliest notice; to smooth over the trying season of convalescence, which nobody else understands; all this is happiness to a good nurse, more or less, in one way or another. The patient is unspeakably grateful to her when she secures him a little solitude. Everybody else is afraid of his being dull, or feeling neglected; and while he longs above everything to be alone, one comes in as soon as another goes out, till he almost believes his pain or weakness would be easy to bear if they would leave him to himself. He would not say so for the world; but the skilled nurse does not need to be told. She puts the little bell by his hand, tells him she shall be within call, promises that nobody shall enter till he pleases, and keeps the promise. Perhaps he sleeps; if not, he has had his wish, and is soothed. Now, these are satisfactions which may be pure from vainglory and every kind of selfishness; and they are as real as the hard work and prosaic duty by which they are obtained.

One of the very greatest blessings of the office is, that it leaves benefits behind it otherwise unattainable. It is scarcely possible that the house should not be a school of nursing for the time, for which every woman in it will be the better. Not only the ladies will gather new ideas, but the servants. The cook will have new notions of sick-diet, and the housemaid of cleanliness in chambers, and of bed-making, and managing the fire. If the servants are made to wait on the nurse, as they ought to do to save her all unnecessary fatigue, they ought to be glad, for their own sakes; for her mere presence and ways teach them much that they did not know they were ignorant of. Under the existing deficiency of nurses, it is no small service to render to society to improve the domestic care of the sick through hundreds of middle-class houses.

After all this review of the position, the speculator on the case has an impression that there must be something behind—some reason yet unrecognized for the absence of candidates for such an employment. Are nurses so gratefully regarded, and so considerately treated? And is the pecuniary reward so good as some people tell us?

As to the treatment, it varies, as I have said, with the sense, temper, and manners of the employer. Some ladies will pay any fee to obtain a nurse from a Home or school, will agree to the rules, and promise everything, and then behave as if the nurse was made of some material that would not wear out. The promise is that she shall have ten hours (the smallest reasonable allowance possible) in the twenty-four for bed, meals, and the open air; but in a little while she finds it impossible to get her clothes off for a week together, or to leave the sick-room for more than a nap when she can get it. It is true, the authorities should look to this; and doubtless they do when they are appealed to; but a humane nurse will rather comply with hard conditions than make difficulties in a season of family distress; but the fact gets abroad—by her subsequent exhaustion, if no otherwise—and it operates to deter. So does the fatigue caused



by the strong demand for nurses from the Homes and schools, when the nurse, just returned from the funeral of a patient, fatigued, depressed, and almost needing nursing herself, is sent out on a new duty before she has had the long nights of sleep, and the few easy days absolutely needful to fit her for another charge. This is constantly happening. The proper remedy is a fuller supply of skilled nurses; but, meantime, some are continually wearing out: and when they have to give up the vocation, and are seen broken down, and without means and without employment, it is not very surprising if observers say they had rather be governesses or domestic servants. The remedy for this mischief is in protecting the interests of the nurses by bringing thoughtless and selfish employers to reason, and showing them that they must take nurses on the nurses' own terms, or go without. The Superintendents of the Homes and schools must also be more strict than some of them have been in guarding the rights and protecting the health of the members of their household. The rest must be looked for from increase of numbers in the profession.

But about the pay? Well! about the pay there seems to be great confusion between the old and actual, and the new and now practicable earnings by nursing. In the last generation it was a very common thing—perhaps rather the rule than the exception—for professional nurses to be in an almshouse, or in the workhouse, or in some way dependent on charity, when past work. Most of us who are not young must have heard physicians speak of this fact with grave concern and indignation. It is true, those nurses were generally poor working-women, uneducated, and unfit for any change of occupation; but then, many were of a higher order than this; and they had much the same prospect before them for their latter years. Even so late as 1861, it appears by the census that of the 27,618 nurses in England and Wales, no less than 682 were in the workhouse—that is, nearly one in forty of their number. After being dismissed from hospitals and lunatic asylums, and dropped from private practice, they were seen to sink into poverty and dependence; and those of their relations and old friends who witnessed the process naturally concluded against the vocation. This is the impression which certainly is widely prevalent: and it may go some way towards accounting for the slowness of women in entering upon it.

In inquiring into the more modern case, we must look at the different ranks and orders separately.

Of the Superintendents of Homes on a religious basis we need only say that they may be ladies of independent means, or appointed to their function by authority or election—in short, by methods which have nothing to do with the market value of nursing service. There are other establishments where a superintendent or matron is the most necessary personage, and the most difficult to obtain, under any inducement that can be offered. This does appear very strange; for not only is this office one of considerable dignity and authority, and of less fatigue than most female bread-winning businesses, but it at present commands almost any pay. The

highest salaries given to women (except, as I said before, a rare singer or other public performer) can be, and would eagerly be, secured to competent matrons, by dozens or scores, if they could now be had. The number of educated women, with some faculty for organizing and training, who apply for instruction for the office of matron or superintendent of nurses is so small that the service suffers through the necessity of appointing persons of inferior qualifications to the post. Yet the position would seem to be more desirable than that of the governess in regard to dignity and independence, while there is no comparison in the pecuniary view. A highly qualified matron can obtain any terms she is likely to ask at a time when no money can represent her value.

The "Sisters" are some of them devoted to their work without hire or recompence of any kind. Some engaged in the occupation under a promise of a pension, sometimes fulfilled, but sometimes withdrawn on account of the insufficiency of the funds. Such is the statement deliberately affirmed by persons who claim to understand the case, while, on the other hand, persons who cannot but know the facts, declare that, even in the best establishments, the lack is of "Sisters"—the applicants being so few that the emoluments as well as the honours go a-begging.

Next, we come to the class—which should so far outnumber all the rest—of the salaried nurses in hospitals and asylums, and in Homes which supply the demand of private practice.

The trustees of the Nightingale Fund are well satisfied that money need not stand in the way of the training of any number of young women for service in hospitals or anywhere else. The demand is so great that money for the purpose is always forthcoming, if the candidates can be got, after the fund has distributed its income. That fund at present maintains and trains in St. Thomas's Hospital, eighteen women between the ages of twenty-five and thirty-five for at least a year each. Thus far, the eagerness to secure them at the year's end has been such that all have been immediately placed, and may be considered provided for for life. As many more are received as can be employed and trained in proportion to the number of patients; and of these, the expenses are paid by private patrons. In the last report of the Nightingale Fund, it is stated that the lowest salary received by any hospital nurse of their pupils is 20*l.* a year, and maintenance in everything but clothes. This lowest pay is certainly not high, being about equal to that of a provincial cook, or a good housemaid; but it is the lowest, while it includes an amount of personal comfort, and a permanence and security of employment, which the humble governess and the milliner's journeywoman can never hope for. What the higher hospital salaries are, I do not know. The certainty of a pension after a fixed age would fill the Homes very easily, if we may judge by what I am told of one, which gives 20*l.* a year after twelve years' service, and which does not suffer for want of applicants. In private practice, a skilled nurse may evidently demand her own terms; and a rich field of enterprise remains for those who, being trained, become the

trainers of others in the new schools which will be rising up everywhere. It is out of the question that the Nightingale Fund, or a few scattered Homes, can send out the many thousands of skilled nurses who are wanted throughout the empire—from the Fraser River round to the Irrawaddy. What they propose, and will achieve, is to send out nurses qualified to form centres of schools of workers like themselves. The whole system is a gradation of training. The fund (or some fund somewhere) trains to its purposes a Mrs. Wardroper, a woman of capacity, sense, and spirit, like the matron at St. Thomas's Hospital. She first makes herself mistress of the art of nursing, and then is ready to begin her proper function as matron. She selects her probationers among the applicants for training at St. Thomas's Hospital, and they enter there under her authority. They have board and lodging and washing in the hospital, at the cost of the Nightingale Fund, for a year; and they have a small payment in money quarterly, amounting for the year to 10*l.*, and some outer clothing; so that they are free of personal cares while undergoing their training. They learn their duties from the matron, the Sisters, and the resident medical officer; and if they make proper use of their opportunities, they come out qualified to instruct others in their turn. It is thus that the art of nursing must spread, as useful arts do, through society, to its humblest level. In their eagerness to demand good nursing, for the public service or private convenience, the rich are now ready to pay for the necessary training of probationers; and at each step of the descent down to the workhouse, the means will spring forth as they are wanted, if only we can find women and girls ready to be taught. There is a striking illustration of our wants and our willingness, as employers, in the story of what the St. John's House Training Institution is doing throughout the country. The admirable distinction of that establishment is that, while a religious society, it co-operates heartily with the great secular institution—King's College Hospital—thus strengthening the force of its religious aims by the best practical discipline; and, again, carrying its religious influence wherever its admirable practical training opens a way to it. Last year, ten women of its staff were trained in the lying-in ward of the hospital, and also passed some time in the general wards, learning how to nurse ordinary medical and surgical cases. Now, what do these women, and those of each successive year, do next? Some are engaged by "The Parochial Mission Women and Nurses' Association." Some are salaried by benevolent individuals in town or country, to attend the poor. Most of them go down to country parishes, where they practise under the sanction of the clergyman, or the ladies of the neighbourhood; and it is pleasant to hear of the readiness of the cottagers to pay what they can for good nursing.

Such a fact as this opens a glimpse of the area of demand for trained nurses; but it requires some contemplation of our whole case to understand what the present deficiency and the ultimate prospects really are. As we find ourselves at the moment in the country parish, let us see first what openings we find there.

Have my readers ever seen, or wished to see, a Village Hospital? It is a large and good subject, that of the Village Hospital; but I will now only touch upon its main points. When a rural labourer gets a cut with a scythe, or has an accident with his master's waggon, or the new steam-cultivator, or with horse or bull, or if he falls ill with fever or rheumatism, it is a melancholy chance for him in his home, where there is no sufficient room for a sick man, nor quiet, nor good diet, nor skilful nursing. Moreover, he is probably so far away from the doctor that he cannot possibly have the attention the doctor would wish. If proper medicines and good diet are sent, there is no certainty that they will be properly administered. If we fancy these liabilities existing in several cases at once, we shall see the wisdom of doing what has been done in certain rural districts—taking a small house, and fitting it up comfortably as a humble hospital, where the doctor can see those particular patients half-a-dozen times a day more easily than he could see them three times a week in their scattered homes. It is found easy to make arrangements with the men or their employers for a small payment out of the weekly wages, so as to give the patients a comfortable feeling of having a right to the advantages of the place; and thus they enjoy with a certainty impossible in their homes the good diet, the cleanliness, quiet, and good nursing on which their lives, or their health and strength for life may depend. Now, the indispensable centre of the whole scheme is the trained nurse. She must be the matron, and, generally speaking, the nurse. When there are too many patients at once for her management she must have help; and when there are none, she is the midwifery nurse of the village. The mention of help brings in the consideration of her usefulness as instructress in her art.

Wherever a sincere and rational effort has been made to train the girls in our National Schools in the arts of the household, it seems to have been successful; and one striking instance of the success and benefit was published in *The Times*, a few years since, by a clergyman in Cheshire. A kitchen, for the benefit of the sick and the very poor, was established; the sufferers—all who needed it in a population of 4,000—were supplied with the very best diet at a wonderfully small cost, while the children from the school learned to cook, and mightily enjoyed the lesson. There seems no reason why the other offices due to the sick should not be learned by village practice in like manner. The girls who will marry, or live with their parents, or go out to service, will have an incalculably better chance of welfare in life for being able to cook, and to wait upon others, and to provide for household cleanliness and neatness. If, having learned these things in the village hospital, one or more of their number should turn out specially fitted for the function of nurse, it will be a great blessing to all parties. Rural life will be a better thing than it has ever been yet, when the labouring class have their own hospital, and their young daughters are chosen to serve it, and invited to show their capability for the honourable and profitable calling of the nurse. But the very

first requisite is not yet attainable. To provide one nurse to each village in the kingdom would take more than all existing institutions could furnish. I give the case here, not in any hope that the thing can be done at once, but to show what a broad and bright road to independence in a new calling lies open to our country lasses, whenever they can find the teacher needed, in every village.

Here our thoughts are led to another great open field—our Workhouse infirmaries. I need only refer to the recent cases of unfortunates who have died of dirt and misery, for want of such nursing as they would have had in a well-managed hospital, to show what I mean. In our Poor-law Unions we have schools, we have sick and aged people, we have infirmaries, and we have funds which are to maintain all the inmates, educate the children, and comfort the helpless and suffering. For want of organizing these materials into one system, we too often see the children wasted and lost, the sufferers miserable, and the funds comparatively unproductive of good. It will be far otherwise when the guardians can obtain a trained nurse or two for each infirmary. Then the elder girls can be brought in from the school, and taught the art of nursing in such perpetual succession as must largely affect the destinies of workhouse-bred women. The workhouse origin will be no longer a fatal bar to industry and independence, when each Union infirmary has become a school of nursing. The demand for the services of the young women trained there will be as eager as it now is languid. There is every reason to suppose that the Poor-law Board will be ready and glad to sanction such an arrangement as this, thereby escaping for ever all danger of coroner's inquests on paupers who have died of bed-sores, or of inappropriate food. The Guardians can have but one feeling about it, everybody will think; for the material and moral economy and relief of such a method of managing the sick inmates must be to them as evident as it would be welcome. But they cannot take the first step, for want of the indispensable trained nurses who are not to be had.

The case is the same, whichever way we turn. Even in our hospitals there are none to spare; and everywhere else, the genuine skilled nurse is so scarce as to be contended for by the rich, and over-worked till she breaks down ultimately. At the same moment, wives, mothers and daughters are making the discovery that they do not know how to nurse. They had always supposed the thing would come of itself when wanted; but now we hear a new tone among them. They say they tremble to think of any grave illness happening to those most dear to them, for they do not know a single thing about the more critical stages of nursing. They have never witnessed long and severe illness; and they can only trust that, when the need arises, good sense and vigilant affection will teach them what to do. But the experienced demur to two things here said. Good sense and watchful affection, however combined with general domestic love and goodness, do not suffice to teach the best care of the sick; and again, to trust that they

will is not all that can be done beforehand. Why do not these wives, mothers and daughters set to work at once and learn the art? There are a hundred details which I need not indicate here which can be learned only by seeing the things done, by being regularly taught, and by actual practice. Why do not people learn them in the proper way? Because it is so difficult to find a teacher, and a place to learn in. Again we are landed in the same difficulty; and private homes are anxious and troubled because there are no schools of nursing accessible, through the deficiency of skilled trainers in the art.

Then there are the Colonies, and yet more, all India, with its hundreds of millions of inhabitants, all constantly liable to death from induced disease, and every species of bad nursing. India and the Colonies would afford a career of honour and profit to more Englishwomen than are now in want of employment and an income. We have heard a great deal of the disproportion of the sexes in many of the colonies, and of the consequent mischief to the comfort, and the morals and manners of the settlers; and of course everybody feels what a good thing it would be if poor and dependent young women at home could be the wives of the involuntary bachelors at the antipodes; but the repugnance general among us to sending out shiploads of young women as candidates for marriage, while pretending to go with other objects, has prevented any such extensive deportation as was taken for granted, as the next step, by persons of hardy sensibilities. In the midst of all this comes in the demand for nurses, quite apart from the bachelor question.

We know, by a published letter from Sydney, that, for want of duly qualified monthly nurses, improper persons engross that lucrative employment, to the serious peril of mother and infant, and sometimes even of the reputation of the house. It is rare luck to obtain a fit nurse on such terms as from 10*l.* to 20*l.* for the month, "besides presents." A fortune may be got, we also hear, by any "sensible woman" who will go out to practise as the German and French women do so commonly and advantageously—in the small way, which is as much nursing as surgery, and does not interfere with the doctors—in managing leeches, blisters, vaccination, cupping, slight wounds and sprains, &c. Such practitioners would be "exceedingly well paid" in the colonies where the medical men are sorely overworked.

All this, however, constitutes a very slight demand in comparison with that which is created wherever sanitary reform is introduced, as it now is into India. Now that hospitals in India are to be worthy of their name, and of the associations we have with it, the requisitions are so vast that it may be more prudent not to state them. The demand for mid-wifery nurses for the depôts of the soldiers' wives could not be met, if this were all. But there are the three Presidential Commissions, charged with the care of the public health: and they will create new stations, new barracks and hospitals for soldiers and civilians, besides the vast things they have to do for the health of natives. If we could send out thousands of skilled nurses every year, they would all be wanted, for many years to



come. Of course, we can do nothing of the sort. But there is one thing that we can do, if the rightly-endowed women can be found. We can create a sort of "covenanted service" of nurses *in India, for India*. We can (surely this must be feasible!) send out—not troops of nurses in shiploads, who would be wanted at home if they were in existence—but a band of matrons and head nurses, qualified for their responsibilities and worthy of them, who should train women already on the spot, whether European or native. Among the soldiers' relatives, those of officials, those of the settlers, and the girls of the schools, there must be more young women ready to be learners and pupil-nurses than can be taught by any force of instructors that we are likely to send out for years to come; and now is the time for women of enterprise, of benevolence, and of an independent spirit, to make a grand use of the best years of their lives, to undertake the most splendid service ever offered to the head, hands, and hearts of women, and achieve an independence in a sure and speedy way, whether they care more or less for that object by itself.

The case of our poor unemployed or overworked countrywomen does appear as astonishing as it is painful, when the particulars of the demands for the most womanly of Woman's work are passed under such a review as we have now made. All reasons or excuses yet offered are trifling, or will presently become so, in face of such a demand as exists for nurses. Inconsiderate ladies, who would overwork the nurse, will soon lose the opportunity by being left in the lurch. Institutions which would underpay the nurses will soon be left in the lurch also, unless they pay as private employers are willing to do. I believe the truth to be that, as I said at the outset, the cause of the anomaly is ignorance on the part of society generally, and of poor ladies and working women in particular. If this is true, the duty of all of us is plain enough. We must put an end to this ignorance; we must place the case of working women in their own hands, by supplying them with facts, and helping them to put their knowledge to use. Most of us have more or less to do with the poor children in the schools of our town, or village, or Union; and some of us may chance to know some educated woman of sense and spirit, with health and activity and no money; and such an one may be happy and fortunate in a post of authority and influence, like that of matron or superintendent of a hospital, Home, school, or workhouse infirmary, or of a Training Institution in old India, or in some rising colony. These, and all the gradations of women between the two, should at least hear from us what their chances in life really are. When we have told them, and shown them the evidence of what remains to be done, we shall have fewer paupers on our hands whom we have not the heart to put into the workhouse; and there will be fewer inquests on patients who need not have sunk; and there will be a relief to us all from the horror and grief of knowing, as we know now, that men are dying by thousands yearly for want of that nursing which women are pining and dying because they cannot give.

## Algiers, 1865.

January 28th.

The invalid in search of a place of refuge from our English winter, or the tourist in quest of novelty, will do well to take his passage from Marseilles in one of the excellent steamers of the *Messageries Impériales*, and pass a few weeks at Algiers.

The one will find, after the middle of December, when the rainy season is usually over, genial sunshine and a climate where the thermometer rarely falls below sixty; and the other, if he can dispense with the social attractions of Rome or Naples, may amuse himself with the aspect of a town still half Oriental in its population and habits, and in making excursions to many scenes of interest which are thickly scattered over a very beautiful country. Both may be comfortably lodged in the Hôtel de l'Orient, a new hotel lately established in the first division of an Algerian Rue de Rivoli, which has been commenced upon the partly finished Boulevard de l'Impératrice, fronted by the harbour, the bay, and the snowy peaks of Atlas, instead of the gardens of the Tuileries.

Hitherto, one of the chief discouragements to foreign visitors has been the scanty supply and indifferent quality of hotel accommodation at Algiers—the old inns, in situation, cookery, and service being very like those of Leghorn, from which the stranger is always so glad to escape. But as building is going on here with almost Parisian activity, it is to be hoped that the rest of the trade will soon be willing to follow the fair example set to them by M. Marius of the New Hotel Company.

The aspect of Algiers from the sea has been the subject of so many similitudes, that a list of them would fill a volume. It has been compared to a lion crouching on a headland, with his head towards the shore; to a swan shaking out its feathers in the sun; to a sail spread out to dry; and to an open quarry of white marble. It is, in fact, a white Moorish town, hanging on the side of a hill, fronted by a long European quarter of French architecture, and backed by picturesque heights, at this season brilliantly green. To this French frontage, Sir Morton Peto is engaged in adding a new face or boulevard, nearly a mile in length, following the bend of the harbour and resting on vaults, some of them fifty or sixty feet high. It is said that his bargain with the Government is, to do the entire work at his own cost, his payment being possession for ninety-nine years of the vaults and the building ground on the land side of his boulevard. The vaults, with their arches open to the harbour,

are, at the points where they are deepest, divided into three or four stories, and a considerable number are already let and occupied as stores and shops.

The Place du Gouvernement, from which this boulevard branches, was built by the French, soon after the occupation in 1830, on the site of demolished streets. Open on the side of the sea, it commands a noble view of the bay, and it is adorned by a few fine palm-trees and by an equestrian statue of the Duke of Orleans, so indifferent as to justify the Emperor in having sent it into exile out of the court of the Louvre. The Moorish quarter of the town climbs the hill behind with its steep narrow streets and stairs; but broad cross-streets are projected and partly commenced, and, in a few years, very little of it will be left. All the houses, great and small, are built on one plan, round a central court, which is often supported on no more than four columns, and is only eight or ten feet square. The doors are sometimes approached by a descent of half-a-dozen steps—sometimes they are placed three feet up in the wall, with a small block of stone to enable those to enter who find a single step of thirty-six inches a feat beyond their agility. The only external ornaments of the architecture are the doorways, which are occasionally of marble, neatly sculptured.

The palace of the Bishop is the best existing example of a handsome Moorish house. The court and its galleries, supported on twisted columns of white marble, are paved and wainscoted with tiles, which, however, appear to be of the indifferent modern manufacture of Valencia or Naples. The cedar balustrades and the doors are grand specimens of intricate Oriental latticework and panelling; the beams and the ceilings are richly carved and painted, and the plaster-work recalls that of the Alhambra, in its elaborate variety of design. In spite of its antique air, I believe the building is not older than the present century; and I am told that the marble columns and pavement employed in its construction and in that of most other luxurious Algerine dwellings, were wrought in Italy. The palace of the Governor-General is a somewhat larger house of the same kind, but not so well preserved, and considerably disfigured by incongruous additions by a French architect. It is said to be insufficient in accommodation, and a new official residence for the Governor is about to be built on Sir Morton Peto's new boulevard. Both the Bishop and the Governor have country-houses; the one on the south and the other on the north side of the town; and the Bishop resides constantly at his villa, only using his Moorish palace for his public receptions.

Society here is probably much the same as in the provincial capitals of France; consisting chiefly of civil and military officials and their families, with a thin sprinkling of the commercial class, and on public occasions a dash of the native element. The Governor-General, Marshal Macmahon, and Madame la Maréchale, are hospitable and popular. They have issued cards for two great balls, one of which has already taken

place, and they hold smaller receptions (with dancing) every Monday. The central court of the palace, pavilioned for the occasion with flags, and adorned with flowers, forms a very effective ball-room; and the Empire, with its fondness for show and glitter, and all that the democracy, which it affects to represent, affects to despise, takes care that Imperial ball-rooms shall be well furnished with gay costumes. Besides the polychromatic soldiers, I counted half-a-dozen civil uniforms: blue and silver, blue and gold in various styles, blue and red, and black velvet with black lace. The Marshal did not wear the cuirass of gold embroidery which usually denotes his rank, but the plain blue coat of a general officer, with the red ribbon of the Legion of Honour. A good many native gentlemen, most of them in the snow-white bernous of Barbary, and black turban, sat on the sofa, or leaned against the columns. Many of them wore a bit of red ribbon on their white drapery, or a star indicative of one or the other grade in the same Legion. The salary of the Governor-General of Algeria seems to be hardly on a scale equal to that of the other great posts of the empire, being only 125,000 francs a year; and of a fifth part of that sum the present tenant is mulcted, in order to provide a pension for the widow of his predecessor, Marshal Pelissier. Perhaps there may be various other allowances attached to the office; but 4,000*l.* a year is not a large sum to support vicerealty in a colony where everything but the necessities of life must come from Europe, and where everything that comes from Europe is dear.

A ball given by the mayor a few nights ago afforded me an opportunity of seeing something of the *bourgeoisie* of Algiers, of a class beneath that which is admitted to the more aristocratic gatherings at Government House.

The Hôtel de Ville, where it took place, is a purely modern building, in the French style, with a small inner court, filled with orange and banana trees. The rooms are convenient and commonplace. In addition to the usual stream of uniforms and crinolines which flowed past the mayoress, there was a considerable number of reverend *cadis*, who administer Mussulman justice amongst the natives, in their gigantic turbans of snow-white lawn, or rich cachemire. One end of the ball-room was filled with a bevy of Jewesses, some in French costume, and the rest—perhaps a dozen, in their ancient attire: usually a high-waisted gown of some rich embroidered stuff—though one of the dark-eyed dames wore crimson trimmed with white—a scarf, and a singularly ungraceful head-dress, consisting of a close black cap, or kerchief, bound tight round the skull, surmounted by a smaller cap, worn at the back of the head, covered with gold coins. In spite of their fine eyes, the effect produced by these ladies was not pleasing; their foreheads being generally narrow and mean, their complexion sallow, and their mouths large and coarse.

Algiers is provided with a spacious and handsome theatre, but the company, though it receives a considerable contribution from the State, does

not succeed in obtaining the patronage of the public, the house being seldom half full. Most of the inhabitants seem to prefer enjoying the cool of the evening, between seven and ten o'clock, in the Place du Gouvernement, where the ladies gossip and the men smoke beneath the gas-lit palm-trees.

The beautiful hills and shores round Algiers are traversed in all directions by excellent roads, between which run many pretty shady lanes and byways, affording charming rides and walks. Tolerable saddle-horses may be hired for five francs a day, and an open carriage with a pair of horses costs two francs an hour. Omnibuses ply on all the roads, and one of the features of Algiers is a stand of these huge vehicles, on which sometimes twenty or thirty may be seen at once in front of the theatre. An omnibus may be hired at the same rate as an ordinary calèche, which must be a convenience and an economy to the full-quivered paterfamilias.

The *Jardin d'Essai*, about five kilometres to the south of the town, is one of the most interesting objects in the vicinity. It lies on both sides of the high-road, stretching on one side down to the sea, and on the other, to the crest of the hill which runs parallel to the shore; and the lower portion is historically interesting as the site where Charles V. landed in 1541, and whence, three days later, the shattered remains of his fleet carried off the shattered remains of his army. The principal features of the garden are two thriving avenues, each about half-a-mile long, the one of platanus and the other of palm, and these are intersected by a narrow alley of bamboos, delightful in its soft whispers and deep umbrage. Extensive nurseries of orange, citron, palm, and all sorts of trees suited to the climate of the colony, are traversed by agreeable walks, and varied by pens, in which ostriches and other large birds, and several varieties of the antelope, are bred with apparent success.

The upper garden commands from its walks, which are shaded by trees from all parts of the world, a noble view of Algiers and its bay. The extent of the whole is about forty hectares, or one hundred acres. Somewhat farther on, the road ascends to the crest of the hill, and reaches the village of Kouba, conspicuous by its high-domed church attached to a Jesuits' college still in progress of erection. Two buildings, consisting of spacious and airy corridors, have been reared right and left of the church, and appear to be already occupied by the fathers and their pupils. The mildness of the climate of Algiers may be estimated by the fact that these galleries are each open at the end to the external air, and are further ventilated above by unglazed openings. The northern side of the building affords one of the best views of Algiers; the eastern side, of a part of the great plain of the Metidja.

On the other, or north side of Algiers, there is also another ambitious ecclesiastical edifice, still incomplete, conspicuous on a lofty headland overhanging the sea—the church of Our Lady of Africa. It is in the Italian-Gothic style, with a tall dome and a semicircular-domed apse at

each of the ends. It is being built, I believe, by voluntary contributions collected by the Bishop. The work is discontinued for the winter, as the keeper gravely told me, one brilliant afternoon, with the thermometer standing about seventy-five in the shade, on account of the "*mauvais temps*."

The vicinity of Algiers abounds in country-houses, hung upon the heights looking to the sea, or nestling in the winding valleys behind them. The owners usually occupy them themselves during the summer, and let or try to let them to foreigners during the winter. Visited on a fine forenoon in January, they appear charming retreats; but during the rainy season, and what is called the cold season, those who have tried them as residences say they are apt to be damp. Communication with the town, for purposes of marketing and other business, is generally rendered easy by the omnibuses.

As a specimen Moorish villa, I went to the Château Didra, formerly a country-house belonging to a Dey, and now the property of an ex-milliner of Paris and London. It is situated on the extensive table-land to the south of the town, and is some eight or nine kilometres distant from it. The exterior presents the aspect of a square white-washed box of two stories, flanked by lower red-tiled buildings. Crossing an outer stable court, you enter one neatly paved with white marble, round which are built the kitchen and other offices, and from which a porch leads to the staircase of the principal mansion. This consists of the usual square court of two stories, with its double range of white columns and tiled galleries. Two or more rooms open from each gallery; and the only changes which appear to have been made in them since the Dey's time was the addition of here and there a fire-place in the European fashion. A good deal of the little furniture they contained—tables, bedsteads, and wardrobes—were of native workmanship, and rudely painted in bright colours, as also were the doors and other wooden fixtures. The views from the small windows on one side over the undulating table-land, and on the other over the plain of the Metidja and the ranges of Atlas, were charming; and the towered top of the house commanded a still more extensive prospect, as well as all the breezes of heaven. By an arrangement not in accordance with Frank habits, the dining-room was in the outer court, and could only be reached from the house proper by crossing the court from the porch. The sharp and civil landlady extolled her dwelling, as she no doubt used to magnify the delicate wares of her sale-room; demanding for leave to live in it the sum of one thousand francs per month; but likely to be tempted, as was privately hinted to me in the town, by a much smaller sum. The house is surrounded by a spacious walled garden and orange orchard; and the property, consisting of forty hectares, yields, as its mistress averred, the best oranges, grapes, silk, and cotton grown in Algeria. But it does not say much for the prosperity of the colony that a house which is quite a bijou in its way, and about one hundred acres of productive land, should have been purchased,



as I am told they were, only two or three years since, for no more than 1,500*l*.

A Trappist convent, about eleven miles from Algiers, formed the object of another interesting drive. Its site is on the first battle-field of the French, after their landing in 1830. In 1843, a grant of upwards of two thousand acres of land was given to the Trappists, and they pitched their humble tent near a graceful group of palms, which still adorns their outer court.

We were kept some little time waiting at the gate, because the brethren were in the refectory, and beguiled the time by looking at the chaplets of beads, medals, crucifixes, and other small articles, religious and secular, which the lay brother who received us was ready to sell for the benefit of the establishment. On the wall hung a MS. list of "*Saintes Reliques*," of which particles might also be purchased.

When we were at last led across the outer court, at the door of the court proper we were consigned to the care of another brother, who led us round the spacious, but very plain whitewashed cloister, and showed us the chapel, dormitories, library, and refectory. The chapel was very simple but of a large size, and the dormitories a series of small boxes placed in two rows in the centre of a large room, with spaces left round the walls as a passage. Of these boxes there might perhaps be one hundred. Each box contained a bedstead, with a coarse woollen cover, and we saw no other article of furniture, nor any ablutionary appliances. The library was a small room with two of its walls covered with bookcases. The books were chiefly religious, and looked as if they rarely left their shelves. In the lately vacated refectory the odour of garlic was overwhelming. A belated member of the confraternity was still at dinner. His repast seemed to consist of some kind of soup, a piece of bread, a lettuce, and an orange. We were then conducted through a large kitchen-garden, a thriving orange and citron orchard, and by a row of workshops back to the convent. In the parlour we were received by a superior father—the prior or sub-prior—who set before us a luncheon of bread and cheese and honey, oranges, dates, and raisins, Cape gooseberries, and some excellent red wine of 1864. A glass of remarkably fine sweet wine of the Frontignan grape concluded the repast, in which we were joined by a French officer and his friend, who had been enjoying a day's shooting on the lands of *La Trappe*. The garden of the convent and an exterior mulberry-plantation are surrounded by a substantial seven-feet wall, enclosing also barns and other offices, to which they are adding a very large storehouse for produce. The fraternity consists of about 130 members. A good many of them were pursuing various rustic employments; loading carts, making a stack of faggots, and driving teams of oxen. These monastic workmen wore their ordinary brown robes, which were looped up to their leathern girdles by the thong and swivel which English ladies call a "page," and their heads were protected by large straw or felt hats.

As we drove along the high-road we met several of their carts, going to, and returning from a quarry, out of which their new storehouse was being built. On the whole, this abode of silence and labour wore an aspect of prosperity and successful industry of which the adjacent villages, such as Cleragas on the one side, and Guyotville on the other, are wholly destitute. The first is an inland agricultural village; the latter, intended for a colony of fishermen, is close to the sea-shore. The guide-book informs the inquiring tourist that Guyotville, which has been built about twenty years, was at first a failure; but that Government having come to its aid, and taken it into its own paternal hands, it is beginning to *sortir d'une situation pénible*. It is questionable whether its inhabitants would say as much; their cabins, built round three sides of a large square, being of the most forlorn description—some of them in ruins. I entered one of these poor cottages, which I found full of smoke and with little else in it. Its mistress, a Minorcan from Mahon—whose yellow child spoke of fever—told me that there was not a fisherman in the place, but that the population lived by their labour on the coast or by making charcoal.

Returning to the town, the museum of the products of the colony deserves honourable mention. Besides stuffed birds and beasts, there are fine specimens of the various woods and marbles of Algeria. Amongst the former, the cedar of Lebanon appears to attain the greatest size—and the *Thuja articulata*—the indestructible *alerce* of Spain, of which the fine old Moorish doors and ceilings still existing at Seville, Cordova, and Granada, are chiefly made—seems the most beautiful and valuable. It is of an extremely compact grain, of great weight, takes a most beautiful polish, and is said to retain its original colour without change. The colour varies in different specimens, from a dark walnut brown to a golden yellow, and the mottling is very rich and varied. Over the marbles, the Algerian onyx, which made so great a figure in the London Exhibition of 1862, reigns supreme. There is a curious assortment of coarse pottery from Kabylia, much of it very antique and good in form, and showing a rude taste for colour and ornament. The metal-work of Barbary, as exhibited in pitchers, coffee-pots, perfume-burners, trays, lamps, cups, bracelets, and brooches, is also well worth examination. In the women's ornaments there is a good deal of coral used in a very effective manner. Some of the textile manufactures, especially the carpets, are likewise attractive in their skilful combinations of colour.

There is also a small museum of Roman and Moorish antiquities, which is well worth a visit, for the sake of the handsome well-preserved Moorish house in which it is placed. Fragments of sculpture and mosaic, and a few inscriptions, form the principal part of the contents. Perhaps one of the most interesting objects is a plaster cast taken from the clay in which a Moorish Christian was buried alive in 1509, by order of Aluch Ali, the famous corsair and pacha of Algiers. The story is very circumstantially told by Diego Haedo, a Spanish historian, who

published a *Historia de Argal* in 1612, mainly compiled from notes taken down from the lips of redeemed captives. He says that Geronimo (that being the Moor's baptismal name) was placed alive in one of the forms in which the mud-blocks used in building were made; and he also indicates the side of the fort, called "The Fort of Twenty-four Hours," then in process of erection, in which the block with its human deposit was placed. The passage having attracted the notice of M. Verbruggen, keeper of the museum library, public attention was called to it in the local newspapers by that gentleman; and when, some years afterwards, in 1853, the fort was ordered to be pulled down, he took steps which led to the discovery of the skeleton. The remains of the martyr were transferred to the cathedral with much pomp, and they lie there beneath an inscription which proclaims him "venerable," waiting until miracles shall have entitled him to the higher epithet of "blessed;" after which it is probable that a new S. Geronimo will be added to the calendar.

The story, as related by Haedo, is in itself a very touching one; and the discovery of the bones in the very spot pointed out by his narrative goes far to prove its general correctness. While the devout hail with pious enthusiasm the recovery of these holy relics, all lovers of literature ought also to regard with satisfaction an incident which is certainly calculated to raise the credit of the chronicler, whose book is now principally valuable for the account which it contains of the captivity of Cervantes at Algiers.

K.

## Wives and Daughters.

AN EVERY-DAY STORY.

### CHAPTER XXIV.

#### MRS. GIBSON'S LITTLE DINNER.



LL this had taken place before Roger's first meeting with Molly and Cynthia at Miss Brownings'; and the little dinner on the Friday at Mr. Gibson's, which followed in due sequence.

Mrs. Gibson intended the Hamleys to find this dinner pleasant; and they did. Mr. Gibson was fond of these two young men, both for their parents' sake and their own, for he had known them since boyhood; and to those whom he liked Mr. Gibson could be remarkably agreeable. Mrs. Gibson really gave them a welcome—and cordiality in a hostess is a very becoming mantle for any other deficiencies there may be. Cynthia and Molly looked their best, which was all the duty

Mrs. Gibson absolutely required of them, as she was willing enough to take her full share in the conversation. Osborne fell to her lot, of course, and for some time he and she prattled on with all the ease of manner and commonplaceness of meaning which go far to make the "art of polite conversation." Roger, who ought to have made himself agreeable to one or the other of the young ladies, was exceedingly interested in what Mr. Gibson was telling him of a paper on comparative osteology in some foreign journal of science, which Lord Hollingford was in the habit of forwarding to his friend the country surgeon. Yet every now and then while he listened he caught his attention wandering to the face of Cynthia, who was placed between his brother and Mr. Gibson. She was not particularly occupied with attending to anything that was going on; her eyelids were carelessly dropped, as she crumbled her bread on the tablecloth, and her beautiful long eyelashes were seen on the clear tint of her oval cheek.



"TU T'EN REPENTIRAS, COLIN."

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She was thinking of something else ; Molly was trying to understand with all her might. Suddenly Cynthia looked up, and caught Roger's gaze of intent admiration too fully for her to be unaware that he was staring at her. She coloured a little, but after the first moment of rosy confusion at his evident admiration of her, she flew to the attack, diverting his confusion at thus being caught, to the defence of himself from her accusation.

"It is quite true !" she said to him. "I was not attending : you see I don't know even the A B C of science. But, please, don't look so severely at me, even if I am a dunce !"

"I did not know—I did not mean to look severely, I am sure," replied he, not knowing well what to say.

"Cynthia is not a dunce either," said Mrs. Gibson, afraid lest her daughter's opinion of herself might be taken seriously. "But I have always observed that some people have a talent for one thing and some for another. Now Cynthia's talents are not for science and the severer studies. Do you remember, love, what trouble I had to teach you the use of the globes ?"

"Yes ; and I don't know longitude from latitude now ; and I'm always puzzled as to which is perpendicular and which is horizontal."

"Yet, I do assure you," her mother continued, rather addressing herself to Osborne, "that her memory for poetry is prodigious. I have heard her repeat the 'Prisoner of Chillon' from beginning to end."

"It would be rather a bore to have to hear her, I think," said Mr. Gibson, smiling at Cynthia, who gave him back one of her bright looks of mutual understanding.

"Ah, Mr. Gibson, I have found out before now that you have no soul for poetry ; and Molly there is your own child. She reads such deep books—all about facts and figures : she'll be quite a blue-stocking by and by."

"Mamma," said Molly, reddening, "you think it was a deep book because there were the shapes of the different cells of bees in it ; but it was not at all deep. It was very interesting."

"Never mind, Molly," said Osborne. "I stand up for blue-stockings !"

"And I object to the distinction implied in what you say," said Roger. "It was not deep, *ergo*, it was very interesting. Now, a book may be both deep and interesting."

"Oh, if you are going to chop logic and use Latin words, I think it is time for us to leave the room," said Mrs. Gibson.

"Don't let us run away as if we were beaten, mamma," said Cynthia. "Though it may be logic, I, for one, can understand what Mr. Roger Hamley said just now ; and I read some of Molly's book ; and whether it was deep or not I found it very interesting—more so than I should think the 'Prisoner of Chillon' now-a-days. I've displaced the Prisoner to make room for Johnnie Gilpin as my favourite poem."

"How could you talk such nonsense, Cynthia?" said Mrs. Gibson; as the girls followed her upstairs. "You know you are not a dunce. It is all very well not to be a blue-stocking, because gentle-people don't like that kind of woman; but running yourself down, and contradicting all I said about your liking for Byron, and poets and poetry—to Osborne Hamley of all men, too!"

Mrs. Gibson spoke quite crossly for her.

"But, mamma," Cynthia replied, "I am either a dunce, or I am not. If I am, I did right to own it; if I am not, he's a dunce if he doesn't find out I was joking."

"Well," said Mrs. Gibson, a little puzzled by this speech, and wanting some elucidatory addition.

"Only that if he's a dunce his opinion of me is worth nothing. So, any way, it doesn't signify."

"You really bewilder me with your nonsense, child. Molly is worth twenty of you."

"I quite agree with you, mamma," said Cynthia, turning round to take Molly's hand.

"Yes; but she ought not to be," said Mrs. Gibson, still irritated. "Think of the advantages you've had."

"I'm afraid I had rather be a dunce than a blue-stocking," said Molly; for the term had a little annoyed her, and the annoyance was rankling still.

"Hush; here they are coming: I hear the dining-room door! I never meant you were a blue-stocking, dear, so don't look vexed.—Cynthia, my love, where did you get those lovely flowers—*anemones*, are they? They suit your complexion so exactly."

"Come, Molly, don't look so grave and thoughtful," exclaimed Cynthia. "Don't you perceive mamma wants us to be smiling and amiable?"

Mr. Gibson had had to go out to his evening round; and the young men were all too glad to come up into the pretty drawing-room; the bright little wood fire; the comfortable easy chairs which, with so small a party, might be drawn round the hearth; the good-natured hostess; the pretty, agreeable girls. Roger sauntered up to the corner where Cynthia was standing, playing with a hand-screen.

"There is a charity ball in Hollingford soon, isn't there?" asked he.

"Yes; on Easter Tuesday," she replied.

"Are you going? I suppose you are?"

"Yes; mamma is going to take Molly and me."

"You will enjoy it very much—going together?"

For the first time during this little conversation she glanced up at him—real honest pleasure shining out of her eyes.

"Yes; going together will make the enjoyment of the thing. It would be dull without her."

"You are great friends, then?" he asked.

"I never thought I should like any one so much,—any girl I mean."

She put in the final reservation in all simplicity of heart; and in all simplicity did he understand it. He came ever so little nearer, and dropped his voice a little.

"I was so anxious to know. I am so glad. I have often wondered how you two were getting on."

"Have you?" said she, looking up again. "At Cambridge? You must be very fond of Molly!"

"Yes, I am. She was with us so long; and at such a time! I look upon her almost as a sister."

"And she is very fond of all of you. I seem to know you all from hearing her talk about you so much."

"All of you!" said she, laying an emphasis on 'all' to show that it included the dead as well as the living. Roger was silent for a minute or two.

"I didn't know you, even by hearsay. So you mustn't wonder that I was a little afraid. But as soon as I saw you, I knew how it must be; and it was such a relief!"

"Cynthia," said Mrs. Gibson, who thought that the younger son had had quite his share of low, confidential conversation, "come here, and sing that little French ballad to Mr. Osborne Hamley."

"Which do you mean, mamma? 'Tu t'en repentiras, Colin?'"

"Yes; such a pretty, playful little warning to young men," said Mrs. Gibson, smiling up at Osborne. "The refrain is—

Tu t'en repentiras, Colin,

Tu t'en repentiras,

Car si tu prends une femme, Colin,

Tu t'en repentiras.

The advice may apply very well when there is a French wife in the case; but not, I am sure, to an Englishman who is thinking of an English wife."

This choice of a song was exceedingly *mal-à-propos*, had Mrs. Gibson but known it. Osborne and Roger knowing that the wife of the former was a Frenchwoman, and, conscious of each other's knowledge, felt doubly awkward; while Molly was as much confused as though she herself were secretly married. However, Cynthia carolled the saucy ditty out, and her mother smiled at it, in total ignorance of any application it might have. Osborne had instinctively gone to stand behind Cynthia, as she sate at the piano, so as to be ready to turn over the leaves of her music if she required it. He kept his hands in his pockets and his eyes fixed on her fingers; his countenance clouded with gravity at all the merry quips which she so playfully sang. Roger looked grave as well, but was much more at his ease than his brother; indeed, he was half-amused by the awkwardness of the situation. He caught Molly's troubled eyes and heightened colour, and he saw that she was feeling this *contretemps* more seriously than she needed to do. He moved to a seat by her, and half whispered, "Too late a warning, is it not?"

Molly looked up at him as he leant towards her, and replied in the same tone—"Oh, I am so sorry!"

"You need not be. He won't mind it long; and a man must take the consequences when he puts himself in a false position."

Molly could not tell what to reply to this, so she hung her head and kept silence. Yet she could see that Roger did not change his attitude or remove his hand from the back of his chair, and, impelled by curiosity to find out the cause of his stillness, she looked up at him at length, and saw his gaze fixed on the two who were near the piano. Osborne was saying something eagerly to Cynthia, whose grave eyes were upturned to him with soft intentness of expression, and her pretty mouth half-open, with a sort of impatience for him to cease speaking, that she might reply.

"They are talking about France," said Roger, in answer to Molly's unspoken question. "Osborne knows it well, and Miss Kirkpatrick has been at school there, you know. It sounds very interesting; shall we go nearer and hear what they are saying?"

It was all very well to ask this civilly, but Molly thought it would have been better to wait for her answer. Instead of waiting, however, Roger went to the piano, and, leaning on it, appeared to join in the light merry talk, while he feasted his eyes as much as he dared by looking at Cynthia. Molly suddenly felt as if she could scarcely keep from crying—a minute ago he had been so near to her, and talking so pleasantly and confidentially; and now he almost seemed as if he had forgotten her existence. She thought that all this was wrong; and she exaggerated its wrongness to herself; "mean," and "envious of Cynthia," and "ill-natured," and "selfish," were the terms she kept applying to herself; but it did no good, she was just as naughty at the last as at the first.

Mrs. Gibson broke into the state of things which Molly thought was to endure for ever. Her work had been intricate up to this time, and had required a great deal of counting; so she had had no time to attend to her duties, one of which she always took to be to show herself to the world as an impartial stepmother. Cynthia had played and sung, and now she must give Molly her turn of exhibition. Cynthia's singing and playing was light and graceful, but anything but correct; but she herself was so charming, that it was only fanatics for music who cared for false chords and omitted notes. Molly, on the contrary, had an excellent ear, if she had ever been well taught; and both from inclination and conscientious perseverance of disposition, she would go over an incorrect passage for twenty times. But she was very shy of playing in company; and when forced to do it, she went through her performance heavily, and hated her handiwork more than any one.

"Now, you must play a little, Molly," said Mrs. Gibson; "play us that beautiful piece of Kalkbrenner's, my dear."

Molly looked up at her stepmother with beseeching eyes; but it only brought out another form of request, still more like a command.

"Go at once, my dear. You may not play it quite rightly; and I know you are very nervous; but you're quite amongst friends."

So there was a disturbance made in the little group at the piano, and Molly sate down to her martyrdom.

"Please, go away!" said she to Osborne, who was standing behind her ready to turn over. "I can quite well do it for myself. And oh! if you would but talk!"

Osborne remained where he was in spite of her appeal, and gave her what little approval she got; for Mrs. Gibson, exhausted by her previous labour of counting her stitches, fell asleep in her comfortable sofa-corner near the fire; and Roger, who began at first to talk a little in compliance with Molly's request, found his *tête-à-tête* with Cynthia so agreeable, that Molly lost her place several times in trying to catch a sudden glimpse of Cynthia sitting at her work, and Roger by her, intent on catching her low replies to what he was saying.

"There, now I've done!" said Molly, standing up quickly as soon as she had finished the eighteen dreary pages; "and I think I will never sit down to play again!"

Osborne laughed at her vehemence. Cynthia began to take some part in what was being said, and thus made the conversation general. Mrs. Gibson wakened up gracefully, as was her way of doing all things, and slid into the subjects they were talking about so easily, that she almost succeeded in making them believe she had never been asleep at all.

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## CHAPTER XXV.

### HOLLINGFORD IN A BUSTLE.

ALL Hollingford felt as if there was a great deal to be done before Easter this year. There was Easter proper, which always required new clothing of some kind, for fear of certain consequences from little birds, who were supposed to resent the impiety of those who do not wear some new article of dress on Easter-day. And most ladies considered it wiser that the little birds should see the new article for themselves, and not have to take it upon trust, as they would have to do if it were merely a pocket-handkerchief, or a petticoat, or any article of under-clothing. So piety demanded a new bonnet, or a new gown; and was barely satisfied with an Easter pair of gloves. Miss Rose was generally very busy just before Easter in Hollingford. Then this year there was the charity ball. Ashcombe, Hollingford, and Coreham were three neighbouring towns, of about the same number of population, lying at the three equidistant corners of a triangle. In imitation of greater cities with their festivals, these three towns had agreed to have an annual ball for the benefit of the county hospital to be held in turn at each place; and Hollingford was to be the place this year.

It was a fine time for hospitality, and every house of any pretension was as full as it could hold, and flies were engaged long months before.

If Mrs. Gibson could have asked Osborne, or in default, Roger Hamley to go to the ball with them and to sleep at their house,—or if, indeed, she could have picked up any stray scion of a “county family” to whom such an offer would have been a convenience, she would have restored her own dressing-room to its former use as the spare-room, with pleasure. But she did not think it was worth her while to put herself out for any of the humdrum and ill-dressed women who had been her former acquaintance at Ashcombe. For Mr. Preston it might have been worth while to give up her room, considering him in the light of a handsome and prosperous young man, and a good dancer besides. But there were more lights in which he was to be viewed. Mr. Gibson, who really wanted to return the hospitality shown to him by Mr. Preston at the time of his marriage, had yet an instinctive distaste to the man, which no wish of freeing himself from obligation, nor even the more worthy feeling of hospitality, could overcome. Mrs. Gibson had some old grudges of her own against him, but she was not one to retain angry feelings, or be very active in her retaliation; she was afraid of Mr. Preston, and admired him at the same time. It was awkward too—so she said—to go into a ball-room without any gentleman at all, and Mr. Gibson was so uncertain! On the whole—partly for this last-given reason, and partly because conciliation was the best policy, Mrs. Gibson was slightly in favour of inviting Mr. Preston to be their guest. But as soon as Cynthia heard the question discussed—or rather, as soon as she heard it discussed in Mr. Gibson’s absence, she said that if Mr. Preston came to be their visitor on the occasion, she for one would not go to the ball at all. She did not speak with vehemence or in anger; but with such quiet resolution that Molly looked up in surprise. She saw that Cynthia was keeping her eyes fixed on her work, and that she had no intention of meeting any one’s gaze, or giving any further explanation. Mrs. Gibson, too, looked perplexed, and once or twice seemed on the point of asking some question; but she was not angry as Molly had fully expected. She watched Cynthia furtively and in silence for a minute or two, and then said that after all she could not conveniently give up her dressing-room; and altogether, they had better say no more about it. So no stranger was invited to stay at Mr. Gibson’s at the time of the ball; but Mrs. Gibson openly spoke of her regret at the unavoidable inhospitality, and hoped that they might be able to build an addition to their house before the triennial Hollingford ball.

Another cause of unusual bustle at Hollingford this Easter was the expected return of the family to the Towers, after their unusually long absence. Mr. Sheepshanks might be seen trotting up and down on his stout old cob, speaking to attentive masons, plasterers, and glaziers about putting everything—on the outside at least—about the cottages belonging



to "my lord," in perfect repair. Lord Cumnor owned the greater part of the town; and those who lived under other landlords, or in houses of their own, were stirred up by the dread of contrast to do up their dwellings. So the ladders of whitewashers and painters were sadly in the way of the ladies tripping daintily along to make their purchases, and holding their gowns up in a bunch behind, after a fashion quite gone out in these days. The housekeeper and steward from the Towers might also be seen coming in to give orders at the various shops; and stopping here and there at those kept by favourites, to avail themselves of the eagerly-tendered refreshments.

Lady Harriet came to call on her old governess the day after the arrival of the family at the Towers. Molly and Cynthia were out walking when she came—doing some errands for Mrs. Gibson, who had a secret idea that Lady Harriet would call at the particular time she did, and had a not uncommon wish to talk to her ladyship without the corrective presence of any member of her own family.

Mrs. Gibson did not give Molly the message of remembrance that Lady Harriet had left for her; but she imparted various pieces of news relating to the Towers with great animation and interest. The Duchess of Menteith and her daughter, Lady Alice, were coming to the Towers; would be there the day of the ball; would come to the ball; and the Menteith diamonds were famous. That was piece of news the first. The second was that ever so many gentlemen were coming to the Towers—some English, some French. This piece of news would have come first in order of importance had there been much probability of their being dancing men, and, as such, possible partners at the coming ball. But Lady Harriet had spoken of them as Lord Hollingford's friends, useless scientific men in all probability. Then, finally, Mrs. Gibson was to go to the Towers next day to lunch; Lady Cumnor had written a little note by Lady Harriet to beg her to come; if Mrs. Gibson could manage to find her way to the Towers, one of the carriages in use should bring her back to her own home in the course of the afternoon.

"The dear countess!" said Mrs. Gibson, with soft affection. It was a soliloquy, uttered after a minute's pause, at the end of all this information.

And all the rest of that day her conversation had an aristocratic perfume hanging about it. One of the few books she had brought with her into Mr. Gibson's house was bound in pink, and in it she studied "Menteith, Duke of, Adolphus George," &c. &c., till she was fully up in all the duchess's connections, and probable interests. Mr. Gibson made his mouth up into a droll whistle when he came home at night, and found himself in a Towers' atmosphere. Molly saw the shade of annoyance through the drollery; she was beginning to see it oftener than she liked, not that she reasoned upon it, or that she consciously traced the annoyance to its source; but she could not help feeling uneasy in herself when she knew her father was in the least put out.

Of course a fly was ordered for Mrs. Gibson. In the early afternoon she came home. If she had been disappointed in her interview with the countess she never told her woe, nor revealed the fact that when she first arrived at the Towers she had to wait for an hour in Lady Cumnor's morning-room, uncheered by any companionship save that of her old friend Mrs. Bradley, till suddenly, Lady Harriet coming in, she exclaimed, "Why, Clare! you dear woman! are you here all alone? Does mamma know?" And, after a little more affectionate conversation, she rushed to find her ladyship, perfectly aware of the fact, but too deep in giving the duchess the benefit of her wisdom and experience in trousseaux to be at all aware of the length of time Mrs. Gibson had been passing in patient solitude. At lunch Mrs. Gibson was secretly hurt by my lord's supposing it to be her dinner, and calling out his urgent hospitality from the very bottom of the table, giving as a reason for it, that she must remember it was her dinner. In vain she piped out in her soft, high voice, "Oh, my lord! I never eat meat in the middle of the day; I can hardly eat anything at lunch." Her voice was lost, and the duchess might go away with the idea that the Hollingsford doctor's wife dined early; that is to say, if her grace ever condescended to have any idea on the subject at all; which presupposes that she was cognizant of the fact of there being a doctor at Hollingsford, and that he had a wife, and that his wife was the pretty, faded, elegant-looking woman sending away her plate of untasted food—food that she longed to eat, for she was really desperately hungry after her drive and her solitude.

And then, after lunch, there did come a tête-à-tête with Lady Cumnor, which was conducted after this wise:—

"Well, Clare! I am really glad to see you. I once thought I should never get back to the Towers, but here I am! There was such a clever man at Bath—a Doctor Snape—he cured me at last—quite set me up. I really think if ever I am ill again I shall send for him: it is such a thing to find a really clever medical man. Oh, by the way, I always forget you've married Mr. Gibson—of course he is very clever, and all that. (The carriage to the door in ten minutes, Brown, and desire Bradley to bring my things down.) What was I asking you? Oh! how do you get on with the step-daughter. She seemed to me to be a young lady with a pretty stubborn will of her own. I put a letter for the post down somewhere, and I cannot think where; do help me to look for it, there's a good woman. Just run to my room, and see if Brown can find it, for it is of great consequence."

Off went Mrs. Gibson rather unwillingly; for there were several things she had wanted to speak about, and she had not heard half of what she had expected to learn of the family gossip. But all chance was gone; for when she came back from her fruitless errand, Lady Cumnor and the duchess were in full talk, Lady Cumnor with the missing letter in her hand, which she was using something like a baton to enforce her words.

"Every iota from Paris! Every i-o-ta!"

Lady Cumnor was too much of a lady not to apologize for useless trouble, but they were nearly the last words she spoke to Mrs. Gibson, for she had to go out and drive with the duchess; and the brougham to take "Clare" (as she persisted in calling Mrs. Gibson) back to Hollingford, followed the carriage to the door. Lady Harriet came away from her entourage of young men and young ladies all prepared for some walking expedition to wish Mrs. Gibson good-by.

"We shall see you at the ball," she said. "You'll be there with your two girls, of course, and I must have a little talk with you there; with all these visitors in the house, it has been impossible to see anything of you to-day, you know."

Such were the facts, but rose-colour was the medium through which they were seen by Mrs. Gibson's household listeners on her return.

"There are many visitors staying at the Towers—oh, yes! a great many: the duchess and Lady Alice, and Mr. and Mrs. Grey, and Lord Albert Monson and his sister, and my old friend Captain James of the Blues—many more, in fact. But of course I preferred going to Lady Cumnor's own room, where I could see her and Lady Harriet quietly, and where we were not disturbed by the bustle downstairs. Of course we were obliged to go down to lunch; and then I saw my old friends, and renewed pleasant acquaintances. But I really could hardly get any connected conversation with any one. Lord Cumnor seemed so delighted to see me there again: though there were six or seven between us, he was always interrupting with some civil or kind speech especially addressed to me. And after lunch Lady Cumnor asked me all sorts of questions about my new life with as much interest as if I had been her daughter. To be sure, when the duchess came in we had to leave off, and talk about the trousseau she is preparing for Lady Alice. Lady Harriet made such a point of our meeting at the ball; she is such a good, affectionate creature, is Lady Harriet!"

This last was said in a tone of meditative appreciation.

The afternoon of the day on which the ball was to take place, a servant rode over from Hamley with two lovely nosegays, "with the Mr. Hamleys' compliments to Miss Gibson and Miss Kirkpatrick." Cynthia was the first to receive them. She came dancing into the drawing-room, flourishing the flowers about in either hand, and danced up to Molly, who was trying to settle to her reading, by way of passing the time away till the evening came.

"Look, Molly, look! Here are bouquets for us! Long life to the givers!"

"Who are they from?" asked Molly, taking hold of one, and examining it with tender delight at its beauty.

"Who from? Why, the two paragons of Hamleys, to be sure! Is it not a pretty attention?"

"How kind of them!" said Molly.

"I'm sure it is Osborne who thought of it. He has been so much

abroad, where it is such a common compliment to send bouquets to young ladies."

"I don't see why you should think it is Osborne's thought!" said Molly, reddening a little. "Mr. Roger Hamley used to gather nosegays constantly for his mother, and sometimes for me."

"Well, never mind whose thought it was, or who gathered them; we've got the flowers, and that's enough. Molly, I'm sure these red flowers will just match your coral necklace and bracelets," said Cynthia, pulling out some camellias, then a rare kind of flower.

"Oh, please, don't!" exclaimed Molly. "Don't you see how carefully the colours are arranged—they have taken such pains; please, don't."

"Nonsense!" said Cynthia, continuing to pull them out; "see, here are quite enough. I'll make you a little coronet of them—sewn on black velvet, which will never be seen—just as they do in France!"

"Oh, I am so sorry! It is quite spoilt," said Molly.

"Never mind! I'll take this spoilt bouquet; I can make it up again just as prettily as ever; and you shall have this, which has never been touched." Cynthia went on arranging the crimson buds and flowers to her taste. Molly said nothing, but kept on watching Cynthia's nimble fingers tying up the wreath.

"There," said Cynthia, at last, "when that is sewn on black velvet, to keep the flowers from dying, you'll see how pretty it will look. And there are enough red flowers in this untouched nosegay to carry out the idea!"

"Thank you" (very slowly). "But shan't you mind having only the wrecks of the other?"

"Not I; red flowers would not go with my pink dress."

"But—I daresay they arranged each nosegay so carefully!"

"Perhaps they did. But I never would allow sentiment to interfere with my choice of colours; and pink does tie one down. Now you, in white muslin, just tipped with crimson, like a daisy, may wear anything."

Cynthia took the utmost pains in dressing Molly, leaving the clever housemaid to her mother's exclusive service. Mrs. Gibson was more anxious about her attire than was either of the girls; it had given her occasion for deep thought and not a few sighs. Her deliberation had ended in her wearing her pearl-grey satin wedding-gown, with a profusion of lace, and white and coloured lilacs. Cynthia was the one who took the affair the most lightly. Molly looked upon the ceremony of dressing for a first ball as rather a serious ceremony; certainly as an anxious proceeding. Cynthia was almost as anxious as herself; only Molly wanted her appearance to be correct and unnoticed; and Cynthia was desirous of setting off Molly's rather peculiar charms—her cream-coloured skin, her profusion of curly black hair, her beautiful long-shaped eyes, with their shy, loving expression. Cynthia took up so much time in dressing Molly

to her mind, that she herself had to perform her toilette in a hurry. Molly, ready dressed, sate on a low chair in Cynthia's room, watching the pretty creature's rapid movements, as she stood in her petticoat before the glass, doing up her hair, with quick certainty of effect. At length, Molly heaved a long sigh, and said,—

"I should like to be pretty!"

"Why, Molly," said Cynthia, turning round with an exclamation on the tip of her tongue; but when she caught the innocent, wistful look on Molly's face, she instinctively checked what she was going to say, and, half-smiling to her own reflection in the glass, she said,—“The French girls would tell you to believe that you were pretty would make you so.”

Molly paused before replying,—

"I suppose they would mean that if you knew you were pretty, you would never think about your looks; you would be so certain of being liked, and that it is caring——"

"Listen! that's eight o'clock striking. Don't trouble yourself with trying to interpret a French girl's meaning, but help me on with my frock, there's a dear one."

The two girls were dressed, and were standing over the fire waiting for the carriage in Cynthia's room, when Maria (Betty's successor) came hurrying into the room. Maria had been officiating as maid to Mrs Gibson, but she had had intervals of leisure, in which she had rushed upstairs, and, under the pretence of offering her services, she had seen the young ladies' dresses, and the sight of so many nice clothes had sent her into a state of excitement which made her think nothing of rushing upstairs for the twentieth time, with a nosegay still more beautiful than the two previous ones.

"Here, Miss Kirkpatrick! No, it's not for you, miss!" as Molly, being nearer to the door, offered to take it and pass it to Cynthia. "It's for Miss Kirkpatrick; and there's a note for her besides!"

Cynthia said nothing, but took the note and the flowers. She held the note so that Molly could read it at the same time she did.

I send you some flowers; and you must allow me to claim the first dance after nine o'clock, before which time I fear I cannot arrive.—C. P.

"Who is it?" asked Molly.

Cynthia looked extremely irritated, indignant, perplexed—what was it turned her cheek so pale, and made her eyes so full of fire?

"It is Mr. Preston," said she, in answer to Molly. "I shall not dance with him; and here go his flowers—"

Into the very middle of the embers, which she immediately stirred down upon the beautiful shining petals as if she wished to annihilate them as soon as possible. Her voice had never been raised; it was as sweet as usual; nor, though her movements were prompt enough, were they hasty or violent.

"Oh!" said Molly, "those beautiful flowers! We might have put them in water."

"No," said Cynthia; "it's best to destroy them. We don't want them; and I can't bear to be reminded of that man."

"It was an impertinent familiar note," said Molly. "What right had he to express himself in that way—no beginning, no end, and only initials. Did you know him well when you were at Ashcombe, Cynthia?"

"Oh, don't let us think any more about him," replied Cynthia. "It is quite enough to spoil any pleasure at the ball to think that he will be there. But I hope I shall get engaged before he comes, so that I can't dance with him—and don't you, either!"

"There! they are calling for us," exclaimed Molly, and with quick step, yet careful of their draperies, they made their way downstairs to the place where Mr. and Mrs. Gibson awaited them. Yes: Mr. Gibson was going; even if he had to leave them afterwards to attend to any professional call. And Molly suddenly began to admire her father as a handsome man, when she saw him now, in full evening attire. Mrs. Gibson, too—how pretty she was! In short, it was true that no better-looking a party than these four people entered the Hollingford ball-room that evening.

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#### CHAPTER XXVI.

##### A CHARITY BALL.

At the present time there are few people at a public ball besides the dancers and their chaperones, or relations in some degree interested in them. But in the days when Molly and Cynthia were young—before railroads were, and before their consequences, the excursion-trains, which take every one up to London now-a-days, there to see their fill of gay crowds and fine dresses—to go to an annual charity-ball, even though all thought of dancing had passed by years ago, and without any of the responsibilities of a chaperone, was a very allowable and favourite piece of dissipation to all the kindly old maids who thronged the country towns of England. They aired their old lace and their best dresses; they saw the aristocratic magnates of the country side; they gossiped with their coëvals, and speculated on the romances of the young around them in a curious yet friendly spirit. The Miss Brownings would have thought themselves sadly defrauded of the gayest event of the year, if anything had prevented their attending the charity-ball, and Miss Browning would have been indignant, Miss Phoebe aggrieved, had they not been asked to Ashcombe and Coreham, by friends at each place, who had, like them, gone through the dancing stage of life some five-and-twenty years before, but who liked still to haunt the scenes of their former enjoyment, and see



a younger generation dance on "regardless of their doom." They had come in one of the two sedan-chairs that yet lingered in use at Hollingford; such a night as this brought a regular harvest of gains to the two old men who, in what was called the "town's livery," trotted backwards and forwards with their many loads of ladies and finery. There were some postchaises, and some "flies," but after mature deliberation Miss Browning had decided to keep to the more comfortable custom of the sedan-chair; "which," as she said to Miss Piper, one of her visitors, "came into the parlour, and got full of the warm air, and nipped you up, and carried you tight and cosy into another warm room, where you could walk out without having to show your legs by going up steps, or down steps." Of course only one could go at a time; but here again a little of Miss Browning's good management arranged everything so very nicely, as Miss Hornblower (their other visitor) remarked. She went first, and remained in the warm cloak-room until her hostess followed; and then the two ladies went arm-in-arm into the ball-room, finding out convenient seats whence they could watch the arrivals and speak to their passing friends, until Miss Phoebe and Miss Piper entered, and came to take possession of the seats reserved for them by Miss Browning's care. These two younger ladies came in, also arm-in-arm, but with a certain timid flurry in look and movement very different from the composed dignity of their seniors (by two or three years). When all four were once more assembled together, they took breath, and began to converse.

"Upon my word, I really do think this is a better room than our Ashcombe Court-house!"

"And how prettily it is decorated!" piped out Miss Piper. "How well the roses are made! But you all have such taste at Hollingford."

"There's Mrs. Dempster," cried Miss Hornblower; "she said she and her two daughters were asked to stay at Mr. Sheepshanks'. Mr. Preston was to be there, too; but I suppose they could not all come at once. Look! and there is young Roscoe, our new doctor. I declare it seems as if all Ashcombe were here. Mr. Roscoe! Mr. Roscoe! come here and let me introduce you to Miss Browning, the friends we are staying with. We think very highly of our young doctor, I can assure you, Miss Browning."

Mr. Roscoe bowed, and simpered at hearing his own praises. But Miss Browning had no notion of having any doctor praised, who had come to settle on the very verge of Mr. Gibson's practice, so she said to Miss Hornblower,—

"You must be glad, I am sure, to have somebody you can call in, if you are in any sudden hurry, or for things that are too trifling to trouble Mr. Gibson about; and I should think Mr. Roscoe would feel it a great advantage to profit, as he will naturally have the opportunity of doing, by witnessing Mr. Gibson's skill!"

Probably Mr. Roscoe would have felt more aggrieved by this speech

than he really was, if his attention had not been called off just then by the entrance of the very Mr. Gibson who was being spoken of. Almost before Miss Browning had ended her severe and depreciatory remarks, he had asked his friend Miss Hornblower,—

“Who is that lovely girl in pink, just come in?”

“Why, that’s Cynthia Kirkpatrick!” said Miss Hornblower, taking up a ponderous gold eyeglass to make sure of her fact. “How she has grown! To be sure it is two or three years since she left Ashcombe—she was very pretty then—people did say Mr. Preston admired her very much; but she was so young!”

“Can you introduce me?” asked the impatient young surgeon. “I should like to ask her to dance.”

When Miss Hornblower returned from her greeting to her former acquaintance, Mrs. Gibson, and had accomplished the introduction which Mr. Roscoe had requested, she began her little confidences to Miss Browning.

“Well, to be sure! How condescending we are! I remember the time when Mrs. Kirkpatrick wore old black silks, and was thankful and civil as became her place as a schoolmistress, and as having to earn her bread. And now she is in a satin; and she speaks to me as if she just could recollect who I was, if she tried very hard! It isn’t so long ago since Mrs. Dempster came to consult me as to whether Mrs. Kirkpatrick would be offended, if she sent her a new breadth for her lilac silk-gown, in place of one that had been spoilt by Mrs. Dempster’s servant spilling the coffee over it the night before; and she took it and was thankful, for all she’s dressed in pearl-grey satin now! And she would have been glad enough to marry Mr. Preston in those days.”

“I thought you said he admired her daughter,” put in Miss Browning to her irritated friend.

“Well! perhaps I did, and perhaps it was so; I am sure I can’t tell; he was a great deal at the house. Miss Dixon keeps a school in the same house now, and I am sure she does it a great deal better.”

“The earl and the countess are very fond of Mrs. Gibson,” said Miss Browning. “I know, for Lady Harriet told us when she came to drink tea with us last autumn; and they desired Mr. Preston to be very attentive to her when she lived at Ashcombe.”

“For goodness’ sake don’t go and repeat what I’ve been saying about Mr. Preston and Mrs. Kirkpatrick to her ladyship. One may be mistaken, and you know I only said ‘people talked about it.’”

Miss Hornblower was evidently alarmed lest her gossip should be repeated to the Lady Harriet, who appeared to be on such an intimate footing with her Hollingford friends. Nor did Miss Browning dissipate the illusion. Lady Harriet had drunk tea with them, and might do it again; and, at any rate, the little fright she had put her friend into was not a bad return for that praise of Mr. Roscoe, which had offended Miss Browning’s loyalty to Mr. Gibson.

Meanwhile Miss Piper and Miss Phœbe, who had not the character of *esprit-forts* to maintain, talked of the dresses of the people present, beginning by complimenting each other.

"What a lovely turban you have got on, Miss Piper, if I may be allowed to say so: so becoming to your complexion!"

"Do you think so?" said Miss Piper, with ill-concealed gratification; it was something to have a "complexion" at forty-five. "I got it at Brown's, at Somerton, for this very ball. I thought I must have something to set off my gown, which isn't quite so new as it once was; and I have no handsome jewellery like you"—looking with admiring eyes at a large miniature set round with pearls, which served as a shield to Miss Phœbe's breast.

"It is handsome," that lady replied. "It is a likeness of my dear mother; Dorothy has got my father on. The miniatures were both taken at the same time; and just about then my uncle died and left us each a legacy of fifty pounds, which we agreed to spend on the setting of our miniatures. But because they are so valuable Dorothy always keeps them locked up with the best silver, and hides the box somewhere; she never will tell me where, because she says I've such weak nerves, and that if a burglar, with a loaded pistol at my head, were to ask me where we kept our plate and jewels, I should be sure to tell him; and she says, for her part, she would never think of revealing under any circumstances. (I'm sure I hope she won't be tried.) But that's the reason I don't wear it often; it's only the second time I've had it on; and I can't even get at it, and look at it, which I should like to do. I shouldn't have had it on to-night, but that Dorothy gave it out to me, saying it was but a proper compliment to pay to the Duchess of Menteith, who is to be here in all her diamonds."

"Dear-ah-me! Is she really! Do you know I never saw a duchess before." And Miss Piper drew herself up and craned her neck, as if resolved to "behave herself properly," as she had been taught to do at boarding-school thirty years before, in the presence of "her grace." By-and-by she said to Miss Phœbe, with a sudden jerk out of position,— "Look, look! that's our Mr. Cholmley, the magistrate (he was the great man of Coreham), and that's Mrs. Cholmley in red satin, and Mr. George and Mr. Harry from Oxford, I do declare; and Miss Cholmley, and pretty Miss Sophy. I should like to go and speak to them, but then it's so formidable crossing a room without a gentleman. And there is Coxé the butcher and his wife! Why, all Coreham seems to be here! And how Mrs. Coxé can afford such a gown I can't make out for one, for I know Coxé had some difficulty in paying for the last sheep he bought of my brother."

Just at this moment the band, consisting of two violins, a harp, and an occasional clarionet, having finished their tuning, and brought themselves as nearly into accord as was possible, struck up a brisk country-dance, and partners quickly took their places. Mrs. Gibson was secretly a little

annoyed at Cynthia's being one of those to stand up in this early dance, the performers in which were principally the punctual plebeians of Hol-lingford, who, when a ball was fixed to begin at eight, had no notion of being later, and so losing part of the amusement for which they had paid their money. She imparted some of her feelings to Molly, sitting by her, longing to dance, and beating time to the spirited music with one of her pretty little feet.

"Your dear papa is always so very punctual! To-night it seems almost a pity, for we really are here, before there is any one come that we know."

"Oh! I see so many people here that I know. There are Mr. and Mrs. Smeaton, and that nice good-tempered daughter."

"Oh! booksellers and butchers if you will."

"Papa has found a great many friends to talk to."

"Patients, my dear—hardly friends. There are some nice-looking people here," catching her eye on the Cholmleys; "but I daresay they have driven over from the neighbourhood of Ashcombe or Coreham, and have hardly calculated how soon they would get here. I wonder when the Towers party will come. Ah! there's Mr. Ashton, and Mr. Preston. Come, the room is beginning to fill."

So it was, for this was to be a very good ball, people said; and a large party from the Towers was coming, and a duchess in diamonds among the number. Every great house in the district was expected to be full of guests on these occasions; but, at this early hour, the townspeople had the floor almost entirely to themselves; the county magnates came dropping in later; and chiefest among them all was the lord-lieutenant from the Towers. But to-night they were unusually late, and the aristocratic ozone being absent from the atmosphere, there was a flatness about the dancing of all those who considered themselves above the plebeian ranks of the tradespeople. They, however, enjoyed themselves thoroughly, and sprang and pounded till their eyes sparkled and their cheeks glowed with exercise and excitement. Some of the more prudent parents, mindful of the next day's duties, began to consider at what hour they ought to go home; but with all there was an expressed or unexpressed curiosity to see the duchess and her diamonds; for the Menteith diamonds were famous in higher circles than that now assembled; and their fame had trickled down to it through the medium of ladies'-maids and housekeepers. Mr. Gibson had had to leave the ball-room for a time, as he had anticipated, but he was to return to his wife as soon as his duties were accomplished; and, in his absence, Mrs. Gibson kept herself a little aloof from the Miss Brownings and those of her acquaintance who would willingly have entered into conversation with her, with the view of attaching herself to the skirts of the Towers' party, when they should make their appearance. If Cynthia would not be so very ready in engaging herself to every possible partner who asked her to dance, there were sure to be young men staying at the Towers who would be on the look-out for pretty girls: and

who could tell to what a dance would lead? Molly, too, though a less good dancer than Cynthia, and, from her timidity, less graceful and easy, was becoming engaged pretty deeply; and, it must be confessed, she was longing to dance every dance, no matter with whom. Even she might not be available for the more aristocratic partners Mrs. Gibson anticipated. She was feeling very much annoyed with the whole proceedings of the evening when she was aware of some one standing by her; and, turning a little to one side, she saw Mr. Preston keeping guard, as it were, over the seats which Molly and Cynthia had just quitted. He was looking so black that, if their eyes had not met, Mrs. Gibson would have preferred not speaking to him; as it was, she thought it unavoidable.

"The rooms are not well-lighted to-night, are they, Mr. Preston?"

"No," said he; "but who could light such dingy old paint as this, loaded with evergreens, too, which always darken a room."

"And the company, too! I always think that freshness and brilliancy of dress go as far as anything to brighten up a room. Look what a set of people are here: the greater part of the women are dressed in dark silks, really only fit for a morning. The place will be quite different, by and by, when the county families are in a little more force."

Mr. Preston made no reply. He had put his glass in his eye, apparently for the purpose of catching the dancers. If its exact direction could have been ascertained, it would have been found that he was looking intently and angrily at a flying figure in pink muslin: many a one was gazing at Cynthia with intentness besides himself, but no one in anger. Mrs. Gibson was not so fine an observer as to read all this; but here was a gentlemanly and handsome young man, to whom she could prattle, instead of either joining herself on to objectionable people, or sitting all forlorn until the Towers' party came. So she went on with her small remarks.

"You are not dancing, Mr. Preston!"

"No! The partner I had engaged has made some mistake. I am waiting to have an explanation with her."

Mrs. Gibson was silent. An uncomfortable tide of recollections appeared to come over her; she, like Mr. Preston, watched Cynthia; the dance was ended, and she was walking round the room in easy unconcern as to what might await her. Presently her partner, Mr. Harry Cholmley, brought her back to her seat. She took that vacant next to Mr. Preston, leaving that by her mother for Molly's occupation. The latter returned a moment afterwards to her place. Cynthia seemed entirely unconscious of Mr. Preston's neighbourhood. Mrs. Gibson leaned forwards, and said to her daughter,—

"Your last partner was a gentleman, my dear. You are improving in your selection. I really was ashamed of you before, figuring away with that attorney's clerk. Molly, do you know whom you have been dancing with? I have found out he is the Coreham bookseller."

"That accounts for his being so well up in all the books I have been

wanting to hear about," said Molly, eagerly, but with a spice of malice in her mind. "He really was very pleasant, mamma," she added; "and he looks quite a gentleman, and dances beautifully!"

"Very well. But remember if you go on this way you will have to shake hands over the counter to-morrow morning with some of your partners of to-night," said Mrs. Gibson, coldly.

"But I really don't know how to refuse when people are introduced to me and ask me, and I am longing to dance. You know to-night it is a charity-ball, and papa said everybody danced with everybody," said Molly, in a pleading tone of voice; for she could not quite and entirely enjoy herself if she was out of harmony with any one. What reply Mrs. Gibson would have made to this speech cannot now be ascertained, for, before she could make reply, Mr. Preston stepped a little forwards, and said, in a tone which he meant to be icily indifferent, but which trembled with anger,—

"If Miss Gibson finds any difficulty in refusing a partner, she has only to apply to Miss Kirkpatrick for instructions."

Cynthia lifted up her beautiful eyes, and, fixing them on Mr. Preston's face, said, very quietly, as if only stating a matter of fact,—

"You forget, I think, Mr. Preston: Miss Gibson implied that she wished to dance with the person who asked her—that makes all the difference. I can't instruct her how to act in that difficulty."

And to the rest of this little conversation, Cynthia appeared to lend no ear; and she was almost directly claimed by her next partner. Mr. Preston took the seat now left empty much to Molly's annoyance. At first she feared lest he should be going to ask her to dance; but, instead, he put out his hand for Cynthia's nosegay, which she had left on rising, entrusted to Molly. It had suffered considerably from the heat of the room, and was no longer full and fresh; not so much so as Molly's, which had not, in the first instance, been pulled to pieces in picking out the scarlet flowers which now adorned Molly's hair, and which had since been cherished with more care. Enough, however, remained of Cynthia's to show very distinctly that it was not the one Mr. Preston had sent; and it was perhaps to convince himself of this, that he rudely asked to examine it. But Molly, faithful to what she imagined would be Cynthia's wish, refused to allow him to touch it; she only held it a little nearer.

"Miss Kirkpatrick has not done me the honour of wearing the bouquet I sent her, I see. She received it, I suppose, and my note?"

"Yes," said Molly, rather intimidated by the tone in which this was said. "But we had already accepted these two nosegays."

Mrs. Gibson was just the person to come to the rescue with her honeyed words on such an occasion as the present. She evidently was rather afraid of Mr. Preston, and wished to keep at peace with him.

"Oh, yes, we were so sorry! Of course, I don't mean to say we could be sorry for any one's kindness; but two such lovely nosegays had been sent from Hamley Hall—you may see how beautiful from



what Molly holds in her hand—and they had come before yours, Mr. Preston.”

“I should have felt honoured if you had accepted of mine, since the young ladies were so well provided for. I was at some pains in selecting the flowers at Green’s; I think I may say it was rather more *recherché* than that of Miss Kirkpatrick’s, which Miss Gibson holds so tenderly and securely in her hand.”

“Oh, because Cynthia would take out the most effective flowers to put in my hair!” exclaimed Molly, eagerly.

“Did she?” said Mr. Preston, with a certain accent of pleasure in his voice, as though he were glad she set so little store by the nosegay; and he walked off to stand behind Cynthia in the quadrille that was being danced; and Molly saw him making her reply to him—against her will, Molly was sure. But, somehow, his face and manner implied power over her. She looked grave, deaf, indifferent, indignant, defiant; but, after a half-whispered speech to Cynthia, at the conclusion of the dance, she evidently threw him an impatient consent to what he was asking, for he walked off with a disagreeable smile of satisfaction on his handsome face.

All this time the murmurs were spreading at the lateness of the party from the Towers, and person after person came up to Mrs. Gibson as if she were the accredited authority as to the earl and countess’s plans. In one sense this was flattering; but then the acknowledgment of common ignorance and wonder reduced her to the level of the inquirers. Mrs. Good-enough felt herself particularly aggrieved; she had had her spectacles on for the last hour and a half, in order to be ready for the sight the very first minute any one from the Towers appeared at the door.

“I had a headache,” she complained, “and I should have sent my money, and never stirred out o’ doors to-night; for I’ve seen a many of these here balls, and my lord and my lady too, when they were better worth looking at nor they are now; but every one was talking of the duchess, and the duchess and her diamonds, and I thought I shouldn’t like to be behindhand, and never ha’ seen neither the duchess nor her diamonds; so I’m here, and coal and candlelight wasting away at home, for I told Sally to sit up for me; and, above everything, I cannot abide waste. I took it from my mother, who was such a one against waste as you never see now-a-days. She was a manager, if ever there was a one; and brought up nine children on less than any one else could do, I’ll be bound. Why! She wouldn’t let us be extravagant—not even in the matter of colds. Whenever any on us had got a pretty bad cold, she took the opportunity and cut our hair; for she said, said she, it was of no use having two colds when one would do—and cutting of our hair was sure to give us a cold. But, for all that, I wish the duchess would come.”

“Ah! but fancy what it is to me,” sighed out Mrs. Gibson; “so long as I have been without seeing the dear family—and seeing so little of them the other day when I was at the Towers (for the duchess would

have my opinion on Lady Alice's trousseau, and kept asking me so many questions it took up all the time)—and Lady Harriet's last words were a happy anticipation of our meeting to-night. It's nearly twelve o'clock."

Every one of any pretensions to gentility was painfully affected by the absence of the family from the Towers; the very fiddlers seemed unwilling to begin playing a dance that might be interrupted by the entrance of the great folks. Miss Phœbe Browning had apologized for them—Miss Browning had blamed them with calm dignity; it was only the butchers and bakers and candlestick-makers who rather enjoyed the absence of restraint, and were happy and hilarious.

At last, there was a rumbling, and a rushing, and a whispering, and the music stopped, so the dancers were obliged to do so too, and in came Lord Cumnor in his state dress, with a fat, middle-aged woman on his arm; she was dressed almost like a girl—in a sprigged muslin, with natural flowers in her hair, but not a vestige of a jewel or a diamond. Yet it must be the duchess; but what was a duchess without diamonds?—and in a dress which farmer Hodson's daughter might have worn! Was it the duchess? Could it be the duchess? The little crowd of inquirers around Mrs. Gibson thickened, to hear her confirm their disappointing surmise. After the duchess came Lady Cumnor, looking like Lady Macbeth in black velvet—a cloud upon her brow, made more conspicuous by the lines of age rapidly gathering on her handsome face; and Lady Harriet, and other ladies, amongst whom there was one dressed so like the duchess as to suggest the idea of a sister rather than a daughter, as far as dress went. There was Lord Hollingford, plain in face, awkward in person, gentlemanly in manner; and half-a-dozen younger men, Lord Albert Monson, Captain James, and others of their age and standing, who came in looking anything if not critical. This long-expected party swept up to the seats reserved for them at the head of the room, apparently regardless of the interruption they caused; for the dancers stood aside, and almost dispersed back to their seats, and when "Money-musk" struck up again, not half the former set of people stood up to finish the dance.

Lady Harriet, who was rather different to Miss Piper, and no more minded crossing the room alone than if the lookers-on were so many cabbages, spied the Gibson party pretty quickly out, and came across to them.

"Here we are at last. How d'ye do, dear? Why, little one (to Molly), how nice you're looking! Aren't we shamefully late?"

"Oh! it's only just past twelve," said Mrs. Gibson; "and I daresay you dined very late."

"It was not that; it was that ill-mannered woman, who went to her own room after we came out from dinner, and she and Lady Alice stayed there invisible, till we thought they were putting on some splendid attire—as they ought to have done—and at half-past ten when mamma sent up to them to say the carriages were at the door, the duchess sent down for

some beef-tea, and at last appeared *à l'enfant* as you see her. Mamma is so angry with her, and some of the others are annoyed at not coming earlier, and one or two are giving themselves airs about coming at all. Papa is the only one who is not affected by it." Then turning to Molly Lady Harriet asked,—

"Have you been dancing much, Miss Gibson?"

"Yes; not every dance, but nearly all."

It was a simple question enough; but Lady Harriet's speaking at all to Molly had become to Mrs. Gibson almost like shaking a red rag at a bull; it was the one thing sure to put her out of temper. But she would not have shown this to Lady Harriet for the world; only she contrived to baffle any endeavours at further conversation between the two, by placing herself between Lady Harriet and Molly, whom the former asked to sit down in the absent Cynthia's room.

"I won't go back to those people, I am so mad with them; and, besides, I hardly saw you the other day, and I must have some gossip with you." So she sat down by Mrs. Gibson, and as Mrs. Goodenough afterwards expressed it, "looked like anybody else." Mrs. Goodenough said this to excuse herself for a little misadventure she fell into. She had taken a deliberate survey of the grandees at the upper end of the room, spectacles on nose, and had inquired, in no very measured voice, who everybody was, from Mr. Sheepshanks, my lord's agent, and her very good neighbour, who in vain tried to check her loud ardour for information by replying to her in whispers. But she was rather deaf as well as blind, so his low tones only brought upon him fresh inquiries. Now, satisfied as far as she could be, and on her way to departure, and the extinguishing of fire and candlelight, she stopped opposite to Mrs. Gibson, and thus addressed her by way of renewal of their former subject of conversation,—

"Such a shabby thing for a duchess I never saw; not a bit of a diamond near her. They're none of them worth looking at except the countess, and she's always a personable woman, and not so lusty as she was. But they're not worth waiting up for till this time o' night."

There was a moment's pause. Then Lady Harriet put her hand out, and said,—

"You don't remember me, but I know you from having seen you at the Towers. Lady Cumnor is a good deal thinner than she was, but we hope her health is better for it."

"It's Lady Harriet," said Mrs. Gibson to Mrs. Goodenough, in reproachful dismay.

"Deary me, your ladyship! I hope I've given no offence! But, you see—that is to say, your ladyship sees, that it's late hours for such folks as me, and I only stayed out of my bed to see the duchess, and I thought she'd come in diamonds and a coronet; and it puts one out at my age, to be disappointed in the only chance I'm like to have of so fine a sight."

"I'm put out too," said Lady Harriet. "I wanted to have come early, and here we are as late as this. I'm so cross and ill-tempered, I should be glad to hide myself in bed as soon as you will do."

She said this so sweetly that Mrs. Goodenough relaxed into a smile, and her crabbedness into a compliment.

"I don't believe as ever your ladyship can be cross and ill-tempered with that pretty face. I'm an old woman, so you must let me say so." Lady Harriet stood up, and made a low curtsy. Then holding out her hand, she said,—

"I won't keep you up any longer; but I'll promise one thing in return for your pretty speech: if ever I am a duchess, I'll come and show myself to you in all my robes and gewgaws. Good-night, madam!"

"There! I knew how it would be!" said she, not resuming her seat. "And on the eve of a county election too."

"Oh! you must not take old Mrs. Goodenough as a specimen, dear Lady Harriet. She is always a grumbler! I am sure no one else would complain of your all being as late as you liked," said Mrs. Gibson.

"What do you say, Molly?" said Lady Harriet, suddenly turning her eyes on Molly's face. "Don't you think we've lost some of our popularity, —which at this time means votes—by coming so late. Come, answer me! you used to be a famous little truth-teller."

"I don't know about popularity or votes," said Molly, rather unwillingly. "But I think many people were sorry you did not come sooner; and isn't that rather a proof of popularity?" she added.

"That's a very neat and diplomatic answer," said Lady Harriet, smiling, and tapping Molly's cheek with her fan.

"Molly knows nothing about it," said Mrs. Gibson, a little off her guard. "It would be very impertinent if she or any one else questioned Lady Cumnor's perfect right to come when she chose."

"Well, all I know is, I must go back to mamma now; but I shall make another raid into these regions by-and-by, and you must keep a place for me. Ah! there are—Miss Brownings; you see I don't forget my lesson, Miss Gibson."

"Molly, I cannot have you speaking so to Lady Harriet," said Mrs. Gibson, as soon as she was left alone with her step-daughter. "You would never have known her at all if it had not been for me, and don't be always putting yourself into our conversation."

"But I must speak if she asks me questions," pleaded Molly.

"Well! if you must, you must, I acknowledge. I'm candid about that at any rate. But there's no need for you to set up to have an opinion at your age."

"I don't know how to help it," said Molly.

"She's such a whimsical person; look there, if she's not talking to Miss Phoebe; and Miss Phoebe is so weak she'll be easily led away into fancying she is hand and glove with Lady Harriet. If there is one thing

I hate more than another, it is the trying to make out an intimacy with great people."

Molly felt innocent enough, so she offered no justification of herself, and made no reply. Indeed she was more occupied in watching Cynthia. She could not understand the change that seemed to have come over the latter. She was dancing, it was true, with the same lightness and grace as before, but the smooth bounding motion as of a feather blown onwards by the wind was gone. She was conversing with her partner, but without the soft animation that usually shone out upon her countenance. And when she was brought back to her seat Molly noticed her changed colour, and her dreamily abstracted eyes.

"What is the matter, Cynthia?" asked she, in a very low voice.

"Nothing," said Cynthia, suddenly looking up, and in an accent of what was in her, sharpness. "Why should there be?"

"I don't know; but you look different to what you did—tired or something."

"There is nothing the matter, or, if there is, don't talk about it. It is all your fancy."

This was a rather contradictory speech, to be interpreted by intuition rather than by logic. Molly understood that Cynthia wished for quietness and silence. But what was her surprise, after the speeches that had passed before, and the implication of Cynthia's whole manner to Mr. Preston, to see him come up, and, without a word, offer his arm to Cynthia and lead her off to dance. It appeared to strike Mrs. Gibson as something remarkable, for, forgetting her late passage at arms with Molly, she asked, wonderingly, as if almost distrusting the evidence of her senses,—

"Is Cynthia going to dance with Mr. Preston?"

Molly had scarcely time to answer before she herself was led off by her partner. She could hardly attend to him or to the figures of the quadrille for watching for Cynthia among the moving forms.

Once she caught a glimpse of her standing still—downcast—listening to Mr. Preston's eager speech. Again she was walking languidly among the dancers, almost as if she took no notice of those around her. When she and Molly joined each other again, the shade on Cynthia's face had deepened to gloom. But, at the same time, if a physiognomist had studied her expression, he would have read in it defiance and anger, and perhaps also a little perplexity. While this quadrille had been going on, Lady Harriet had been speaking to her brother.

"Hollingsford!" she said, laying her hand on his arm, and drawing him a little apart from the well-born crowd amid which he stood, silent and abstracted, "you don't know how these good people here have been hurt and disappointed with our being so late, and with the duchess's ridiculous simplicity of dress."

"Why should they mind it?" asked he, taking advantage of her being out of breath with eagerness.

"Oh, don't be so wise and stupid; don't you see, we're a show and a spectacle—it's like having a pantomime with harlequin and columbine in plain clothes."

"I don't understand how——" he began.

"Then take it upon trust. They really are a little disappointed, whether they are logical or not in being so, and we must try and make it up to them; for one thing, because I can't bear our vassals to look dissatisfied and disloyal, and then there's the election in June."

"I really would as soon be out of the House as in it."

"Nonsense; it would grieve papa beyond measure—but there is no time to talk about that now. You must go and dance with some of the townspeople, and I'll ask Sheepshanks to introduce me to a respectable young farmer. Can't you get Captain James to make himself useful? There he goes with Lady Alice! If I don't get him introduced to the ugliest tailor's daughter I can find for the next dance!" She put her arm in her brother's as she spoke, as if to lead him to some partner. He resisted, however—resisted piteously.

"Pray don't, Harriet. You know I can't dance. I hate it; I always did. I don't know how to get through a quadrille."

"It's a country dance!" said she, resolutely.

"It's all the same. And what shall I say to my partner? I haven't a notion: I shall have no subject in common. Speak of being disappointed, they'll be ten times more disappointed when they find I can neither dance nor talk!"

"I'll be merciful; don't be so cowardly. In their eyes a lord may dance like a bear—as some lords not very far from me are—if he likes, and they'll take it for grace. And you shall begin with Molly Gibson, your friend the doctor's daughter. She's a good, simple, intelligent little girl, which you'll think a great deal more of, I suppose, than of the frivolous fact of her being very pretty. Clare! will you allow me to introduce my brother to Miss Gibson? he hopes to engage her for this dance. Lord Hollingford, Miss Gibson!"

Poor Lord Hollingford! there was nothing for it but for him to follow his sister's very explicit lead, and Molly and he walked off to their places, each heartily wishing their dance together well over. Lady Harriet flew off to Mr. Sheepshanks to secure her respectable young farmer, and Mrs. Gibson remained alone, wishing that Lady Cumnor would send one of her attendant gentlemen for her. It would be so much more agreeable to be sitting even at the fag-end of nobility than here on a bench with everybody; hoping that everybody would see Molly dancing away with a lord, yet vexed that the chance had so befallen that Molly instead of Cynthia was the young lady singled out; wondering if simplicity of dress was now become the highest fashion, and pondering on the possibility of cleverly inducing Lady Harriet to introduce Lord Albert Monson to her own beautiful daughter, Cynthia.

Molly found Lord Hollingford, the wise and learned Lord Hollingford,



strangely stupid in understanding the mystery of "Cross hands and back again, down the middle and up again." He was constantly getting hold of the wrong hands, and as constantly stopping when he had returned to his place, quite unaware that the duties of society and the laws of the game required that he should go on capering till he had arrived at the bottom of the room. He perceived that he had performed his part very badly, and apologized to Molly when once they had arrived at that haven of comparative peace, and he expressed his regret so simply and heartily that she felt at her ease with him at once, especially when he had confided to her his reluctance at having to dance at all, and his only doing it under his sister's compulsion. To Molly he was an elderly widower, almost as old as her father, and by-and-by they got into very pleasant conversation. She learnt from him that Roger Hamley had just been publishing a paper in some scientific periodical, which had excited considerable attention, as it was intended to confute some theory of a great French physiologist, and Roger's article proved the writer to be possessed of a most unusual amount of knowledge on the subject. This piece of news was of great interest to Molly, and, in her questions, she herself evinced so much intelligence, and a mind so well prepared for the reception of information, that Lord Hollingford at any rate would have felt his quest of popularity a very easy affair indeed, if he might have gone on talking quietly to Molly during the rest of the evening. When he took her back to her place, he found Mr. Gibson there, and fell into talk with him, until Lady Harriet once more came to stir him up to his duties. Before very long, however, he returned to Mr. Gibson's side, and began telling him of this paper of Roger Hamley's, of which Mr. Gibson had not yet heard. In the midst of their conversation, as they stood close by Mrs. Gibson, Lord Hollingford saw Molly in the distance, and interrupted himself to say, "What a charming little lady that daughter of yours is! Most girls of her age are so difficult to talk to; but she is intelligent and full of interest in all sorts of sensible things; well read, too—she was up in *Le Règne Animal*—and very pretty!"

Mr. Gibson bowed, much pleased at such a compliment from such a man, was he lord or not. It is very likely that if Molly had been a stupid listener, Lord Hollingford would not have discovered her beauty, or the converse might be asserted—if she had not been young and pretty he would not have exerted himself to talk on scientific subjects in a manner which she could understand. But in whatever manner Molly had won his approbation and admiration, there was no doubt that she had earned it somehow. And, when she next returned to her place, Mrs. Gibson greeted her with soft words and a gracious smile; for it does not require much reasoning power to discover that if it is a very fine thing to be mother-in-law to a very magnificent three-tailed bashaw, it pre-supposes that the wife who makes the connection between the two parties is in harmony with her mother. And so far had Mrs. Gibson's thoughts wandered into futurity. She only wished that the happy chance had fallen to Cynthia's

instead of to Molly's lot. But Molly was a docile, sweet creature, very pretty, and remarkably intelligent, as my lord had said. It was a pity that Cynthia preferred making millinery to reading; but perhaps that could be rectified. And there was Lord Cumnor coming to speak to her, and Lady Cumnor nodding to her, and indicating a place by her side.

It was not an unsatisfactory ball upon the whole to Mrs. Gibson, although she paid the usual penalty for sitting up beyond her usual hour in perpetual glare and movement. The next morning she awoke irritable and fatigued; and a little of the same feeling oppressed both Cynthia and Molly. The former was lounging in the window-seat, holding a three-days-old newspaper in her hand, which she was making a pretence of reading, when she was startled by her mother's saying,—

"Cynthia! can't you take up a book and improve yourself. I am sure your conversation will never be worth listening to, unless you read something better than newspapers. Why don't you keep up your French? There was some French book that Molly was reading—*Le Règne Animal*, I think."

"No! I never read it!" said Molly, blushing. "Mr. Roger Hamley sometimes read pieces out of it when I was first at the Hall, and told me what it was about."

"Oh! well. Then I suppose I was mistaken. But it comes to all the same thing. Cynthia, you really must learn to settle yourself to some improving reading every morning."

Rather to Molly's surprise, Cynthia did not reply a word; but dutifully went and brought down from among her Boulogne school-books, *Le Siècle de Louis XIV.* But after a while Molly saw that this "improving reading" was just as much a mere excuse for Cynthia's thinking her own thoughts as the newspaper had been.

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## Hearts of Oak.

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THE collier captain is going fast off the stage! There is a shadow already on the slides. Steam, all-powerful steam, is driving him away. He has stood long and battled manfully, but it needs no prophetic eye to see on which side the victory will ultimately incline. Let us stop him for a moment.

Generally above the average height, but always with broad shoulders, or, as he would express it, "plenty of beam," the old captain of the collier may be seen in Thames Street, or on Tower Hill, making his way, slowly and deliberately, to some office in that neighbourhood. His vessel, the *Nymph*, very full-bodied, and by no means prepossessing in appearance, is in the pool. "Coals and gravel" and "gravel and coals," alternately, are the only visitors she receives. She is one of a class numbering 7,000 or 8,000, always employed in bringing comfort to the fire-side. Their tonnage varies from 90 to 600 N. N. measurement, the average number being of the burden of 200 or 250 tons. The tonnage is not, however, the extent of their carrying capacity. This varies according to the shape of the vessel and the description of coal with which it is loaded, but it is always far in excess of the actual tonnage. Thus a vessel measuring 260 tons calculated according to the rules prescribed by the Merchant Shipping Act, has been known to carry upwards of 400 tons of coals.

Very few vessels are built purposely for this trade. The history of the building, career, and conversion of many of them to their present use would be highly entertaining. One, in bygone days, has been a fruiterer, and dashed home from St. Michael's through the foaming Bay of Biscay with the first cargo of oranges; another has brought gold-dust and palm-oil from the western coast of Africa, until Lloyd's surveyor intimated that a considerable outlay would be necessary previously to another voyage; whilst a third, built by easy-going Dutchmen, struck on a sand in the Channel and was saved from an ignominious end only to be bought as a wreck by old Captain Pottle, and repaired and renovated in order that his son might attain the proud position of "master of a collier."

The individuality, therefore, so to speak, of the vessel is maintained; but there are many points of similarity in each, partaking sometimes of a negative rather than of a positive character. Thus the fruiterer loses her copper at once, the West African its taunt topmasts and long yards, and the Dutchman that pleasant house on deck where his crew slept in delightful proximity to each other. Then the masts are seldom clean; the sails are not white, and as a point of positive resemblance the "pumps" are frequently going. In a collier having only ballast, a few feet of water is not thought of much consequence, unless it rises to the "floor" of the

ship, when the insouciance with which this inveterate habit of the ship is regarded, is for the moment laid aside, and the pumps are manned. A second point of resemblance is the jaunty air they assume when damaged, and as they generally meet with some mishaps on their voyage to or from the North, this similarity is most obvious. To meet a collier without a hole or patch in her sails, or jib-boom gone, or railing or bulwark "carried away," is a rare sight. Captains of other vessels would have the damages repaired at once, but with the collier this matter is postponed until his arrival at home.

Then no other vessels are subject to such changes of depression and elevation as the collier. When loaded she is uncomfortably close to the water, and if there be much sea, is terribly wet and unpleasantly dangerous. There is no buoyancy whatever in her. Instead of rising gently to the approaching wave, she plunges under it, and half drowns a man who may happen to be on the bowsprit before she recovers from the shock. If at anchor, and the weather be stormy, she is nearly as bad, and rides "bows under." When "in ballast," she is perhaps the most unwieldy machine afloat. It is true that, with a fair wind, she will sail tolerably well, but the sea must not be rough or she will roll so much as to endanger the safety of the masts. In fine weather, and with a tide running strongly in her favour, the light collier will imitate the manœuvre of "working to windward." It is at best, however, only a burlesque, as a spectator who on shore watches one of them will readily perceive. It is the tide which is really drifting the vessel against the wind, very much in the same way as they are frequently seen "dropping down" the Thames. But if a strong wind, or a summer's breeze, spring up, the light collier is no bad example of the folly of appearing great without an adequate substructure of ability or character: at the first warning of the impending change the bird must be stripped of its plumage, and trust for safety to a rusty chain. The wind is blowing on the shore, or towards a sand: all depends on the chain.

In other vessels placed in an emergency of that character the sails are reefed and ready to be hoisted, so as to enable the ship to gain an offing, but with the light collier this is impracticable. If sails were loosed she would be on her beam-ends, or perhaps capsize altogether. All that can be done is to watch the chain, and, like those of old, "pray for daylight."

Then the light collier is subject to much caprice about turning round, or "coming about," and not unfrequently "jibs" altogether, and much coaxing and delicate handling are required to induce a compliance with the captain's wish. He, good honest man, never blames the ship; the man did not "put the helm down" at the right time, is the excuse he will make.

The vessel is perhaps tacking between a sand and the shore, with a strong ebb-tide in her favour, and the captain being anxious to make the most of the daylight, approaches the sand-bank as closely as prudence, guided by the soundings of the lead, dictates. He then gives the order "bout ship there," but the *Happy Family* is ill-tempered, and yields little

obedience to the governing power. The captain glances upwards. "Hard down, I say," is shouted. "Hard it is, sir," replies the man who is steering; and as he speaks he gives an extra tug at one of the spokes in the wheel, to show that he is right. The master waits a moment, then says, "She won't come round; we must fill on her again. Up helm." So the fat face of the *Happy Family* is turned away from the wind in order to give her breath, and perhaps induce a better frame of mind. But the coaxing is useless. From a staid matron apparently dreading a pirouette, she now seems given to flirtation, and elated by the attention of a summer's puff, runs away from her chaperon, and is hard and fast in the sand before the helm can be firmly put down again. And this is the cause of the paragraph which will appear in the shipping intelligence of *The Times* on the following morning:—"Yarmouth, January 13. Fine. Wind N.E. The *Happy Family*, in working through the Roads, missed stays, and went ashore on the Scroby. Assisted off by beachmen, and towed into harbour. Seems much strained, and must go on slip for repairs."

Characterized by good nature and simplicity, the collier captain passes his life in dangers and difficulties. There is no six weeks' run for him with a fair wind and neither "sheet nor tack" altered, no getting into the "trades," and no pleasant passengers to wile away the time in calms. There is one exception, perhaps—his dog, and that he values. It caught a thief who had entered his cabin, and it jumped overboard in a heavy sea after his hat. Besides, his children play with him when he is at home, and if they venture too far in the surf its great shaggy head is soon close to them, and they are pulled, half in earnest half in sport, on the dry land. To watch the gambols of his children and dog is the highest enjoyment he knows.

When freights are high, and the captain is part owner, he has been known to build a house, but then he excuses the expenditure on the ground that if "anything should happen to him his family won't be turned adrift." The builder designs the house, but two things are indispensable—a bay window, in order that there may be a "good look-out," and cupboards, or "lockers" as Captain Pottle terms them, inside. "They are so handy, sir, for stowing things away," was the apologetical remark made by that worthy man as we expressed surprise at the number of brass buttons and handles shining in each corner of the room. They doubtless remind him of similar receptacles in the cabin of his ship, where he and the "mate" have passed many hours together, sometimes in pleasant talk, sometimes in anxious debate as to their propinquity to a sand when the fog has been thick and no light visible.

Besides the mate, there are usually in a collier of 200 tons three able seamen and two apprentices, the younger of whom is designated "boy," and what that boy does is marvellous. He is of course compelled to obey the captain and mate, and the seamen exact obedience from him too. He is always wanted. If one of the able seamen is ordered to pull a sheet or rope more tightly, he wants the boy to hold on the end of it.

If any halliard is jammed in a block, or any confusion in the ropes aloft, the "boy" is sent up at once either to "cast off" the knot or report what is the matter. The captain wants him in the cabin, the cook in the galley, the mate on deck, and the three able seamen close to the precise spot where they happen to be. He is sent up to unroll the "burgee," which is foul; down in the forepeak for a coil of rope. It is "Figaro quà, Figaro là, Figaro su, Figaro giù." And "where's that boy?" "bless that boy!" "that boy's no use at all!" are exclamations which add considerable piquancy to the conversation of a collier's crew. But when danger comes and the boat is launched off the deck of the foundering ship, the "boy" is put first into it; or if a rope is the only means of communication between a stranded vessel and the shore, some strong man may go first to see that "all is right," but the boy is the second.

The boys who determine on a seafaring life are sometimes country lads, tired of the plough, very difficult to teach, and frequently very obstinate; boys from towns with a great deal of low cunning and a hazy notion of the rights of property; and boys who have relatives at sea, and who are disagreeable by continually making invidious comparisons between their master and others, or their fellow-seamen and friends. Perhaps, too, they are natives of the place whence the vessel hails, and are "well up" in all the local gossip of the port. If so, that boy will render every crew discontented. The best apprentices are the boys from the different Unions. Their habits are generally clean and tidy; they are sufficiently educated to amuse themselves during their leisure hours by reading, and if not spoilt by the mistaken kindness of their friends in enticing them from the ship when in harbour, make good seamen. But the lads too frequently yield to the temptation unwisely presented to them, and it requires great tact to keep them steadily to their duties.

The captain, mate, three men, the apprentice and the boy, do not lead idle lives. There are fourteen sails to be hoisted, reefed, stowed and hauled about, besides those set in light weather on booms projecting from the yards, and called studding-sails.

Under ordinary circumstances, nine out of the fourteen sails would be kept set during the night. The crew would be divided into two watches, one half being at rest. Excluding, therefore, the boy and the man who is steering, there are only two men to shift these nine sails from time to time as exigencies require. And it must be remembered that the ropes are not made of Manila hemp, neither are there patent blocks. No wonder that the captain is frequently on deck during the whole night. On him rests the whole responsibility of the lives of himself and crew, and the safety of the ship. His perils are numerous, and beset him at every step. He fears a collision when at sea, and in bays and rivers he is subject to the same casualty. So are mariners generally: but there is one kind of collision of which he is frequently the victim, and generally from vessels of his own character, and it arises in this wise:—Let us assume that the wind has been blowing in a particular direction for some days, and that a



large number of vessels have been windbound. At length it shifts, and all move off as quickly as possible, and with varying speed hasten on their voyage. But the wind dies away, the ebb-tide is running fast, and the whole "fleet," as it is sometimes called, must anchor. This they accordingly do, and it follows that some are, more or less, in dangerous proximity to each other. The chain attached to the anchor, and made fast through a hawse-pipe to the bow or forepart of the vessel, acts as a pivot on which it swings, and the wind and tide, each in its turn, cause the vessel to move on this pivot, sometimes to the extent of a fourth part of a circle. Hence it follows that if three or four vessels be moored abreast of each other, they are very likely, whilst waltzing in this manner, to foul each other. To prevent this, an able master will endeavour to make his vessel "lie with a sheer." This is done by putting his helm to port or starboard, just as the sea-room on either side may warrant. If the tiller or helm be put to the starboard, the rudder is moved to the port-side of the ship, and the tide impinging on it with velocity drives the stern in the contrary direction, *i.e.* to starboard, as far as the force of the wind will permit; and it is no uncommon thing, assuming the wind to be blowing, and the tide to be running from north to south, to see ships at anchor with their bows or foreparts directed towards the north-west or north-east. Great care is required in watching the vessel in this position, lest it should fall off or "break its sheer." If it do so, and the wind be strong, the ship comes smashing round, driven by the combined force of the wind and tide, into its next neighbour.

As many as five vessels have been disabled or damaged by one breaking her sheer. The prolonged suspense of this sort of collision can scarcely be exaggerated. It is different to the thundering crash caused by two vessels meeting each other "end on," the hasty scramble from the sinking ship, or the "*cita mors*" which unfortunately overtakes some. The chances are that here the yards and running rigging become interlaced in a maze of confusion, whilst the hulls are battering each other to pieces. Ropes are cut remorselessly, chains unshackled, spars sent adrift, and every conceivable effort made to cause a separation. These are often successful, and if, as sometimes happens, the wind has changed during the collision, an energetic captain will order his men to "clear away the wreck," and refusing all assistance from sympathizing beachmen, sail away for his port of destination, rather proud than otherwise that his crippled condition makes him the cynosure of nautical eyes on board the different craft he meets.

To this kind of collision he is also subject when riding at anchor in his favourite spots in the Thames, as Sea Reach and Bugsby's Hole. Supposing him, however, to have weighed his anchor, and managed, with the aid of a waterman, to get down the river with the loss only of his jolly-boat, which was being towed behind him, and, as he says in his letter to the owner, was cut in two by Citizen boat No. 20, he has still much to think about.

Between the Thames and Flamborough Head, a distance in round numbers of 200 miles only, there are 41 distinct sands, exclusive of those lying in inlets, such as the "Wash" and the "Humber," and of "points," or "nesses," jutting from the coast into the sea. They vary in length from one mile to fifteen. One is shaped like a crocodile, another is round and plump as a porpoise, whilst a third will have an elbow or hook at its termination as if resolutely bent on catching its prey; and all form most uncomfortable resting-places for tired colliers. Over these 200 miles something like 5,000 colliers are continually passing.

In addition to the 5,000 colliers there are steamers and schooners from Scotland, Humber keels employed in the grain-trade, timber-ships from the Baltic, Dutchmen with oil-cake, Prussians with corn, vessels carrying fish from the Dogger Bank, fleets of luggers engaged in the herring and mackerel fisheries, and the ubiquitous barge.

During the night, whether sailing or at anchor, all these vessels must exhibit lights, and it can easily be imagined, therefore, how, in foggy weather, or with sleet and snow driven by a strong north-east wind into his eyes, the captain may easily fall into an error respecting the position or character of a light when first seen. The Trinity Board have, by making some lights revolve, and others flash red or green, done all that science and care can effect to make them easily recognizable; but when a man has been on deck for a night and a day, and the second night finds him still there, with his vessel labouring under double-reefed topsails, and the pump at work during every watch, he is entitled to some consideration if his faculties are not just then of that high order which is considered the standard of nautical intelligence.

It is almost remarkable, considering the number of coasting-vessels annually wrecked, how few are lost in consequence of an error of this nature. The gales of the last two months have made dreadful havoc amongst shipping, but we do not, at the moment, remember an instance of the destruction of a vessel from the cause we are now considering. The loss of the unfortunate *Friendship* is, no doubt, attributable to the same cause as that of the steamer *Stanley*—the want of a leading light into Shields Harbour. Now that vessels drawing ten or twelve feet of water can enter the Tyne at low water, a light of the kind indicated is absolutely necessary. Nothing indeed should be left undone which would either afford guidance or succour to the hardy mariners who brave the winter's tempests on our perilous coast.

The captain of the collier is faithful to death. When, at last, his body is washed ashore, the ship's accounts and papers are always found securely buttoned in the breast pocket of his pea-jacket. In the fearful gale of December last, a captain lost his life entirely in consequence of this attention to duty.

We could narrate many, very many episodes illustrative of the loss of colliers and the men who navigate them; but we will content ourselves with one, which, if written in a work of fiction, would be styled "far-fetched."

The owner of the *Ellen* lived on the banks of a river. His residence was distant from the sea about five miles. The captain of the *Ellen* was a serious and well-disposed man, and out of his earnings supported a widowed mother and a sister. The *Ellen* was chartered to Wales for coals to be brought to the port to which she belonged. Before she rounded the Land's End she had been in collision twice and driven through stress of weather into Torbay.

She sailed from Milford Haven on the 18th of November, but was compelled to return on the following day. The captain writes of himself and fellow-coasters :—"A heavy gale from W.S.W.; forced to bear up. Got in all safe; thick with rain at 2 A.M. At daylight there was nothing to see but wrecks and ships dismasted. A large full-rigged ship drove on the shore." Then on the 22nd of November he makes another trial and reaches St. Ann's Light, but is again compelled to put back. He informs his owner of his return, accompanying the communication with this remark :—"I must thank God that we are here safe, as there has been much destruction amongst shipping." He begins to grow dispirited lest his owner should think he is not exerting himself, and on the 24th he wrote :—"I am nearly distracted to think I have been here so long." Two days afterwards he writes that he has been driven back with sixty or seventy others, and concludes :—"I hope, please God, we shall soon have a start of wind, so that we may make our voyage." Strong winds detained him in the haven till the middle of December, and on the 21st of that month he was heard of as being in the Downs.

A few days after the receipt of this intelligence, the owner was walking on the beach, or hardway, at the mouth of the river whither the *Ellen* was bound, occasionally looking seaward in anticipation of desecrying her, when he happened to see a mast which had been towed in by a smack on the previous tide. He looked at it, and thought it resembled the main-mast of his ship. His suspicions were confirmed by a further examination. There was the mast whole. It had not been cut away for the preservation of the ship. No. The *Ellen* must have struck on some sand and been entirely broken up, or the mast could not have been washed out of her. Nothing has since been heard of her fate. Pieces of wreck, including her name, have been washed ashore, and that is all.

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## The Devils of Morzine.

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MOST of our readers have probably spent pleasant hours by the brilliant shores of Lake Lemman, and know by experience that every refinement of our latest civilization, with few of its drawbacks, meets the crowd that loiters along the waterside from Geneva to Montreux. Society breakfasts, reads the papers, dresses, dines, and gossips, as well under the shadow of Mont Blanc as in London or Paris, with the added charm of mountain air and scenery. The very comfort, however, of his modern surroundings may set the traveller thinking of the time not so very long ago when the dark mountain district of the Chablais that rises abruptly before him on the Savoy side of the lake was accounted by those learned in such matters, the fatherland of wizards, from whence they descended in swarms to devastate the plains of France and Germany. "Au pays de Savoie," says Lambert Danneau, who wrote in 1579, "et aux environs, les sorciers sont si épais qu'on ne peut les dénicher quoiqu'on s'en fasse une diligente inquisition et encore une plus rigoureuse justice, et qu'on ait brûlé en un an jusqu'à quatre vingts en une seule ville de cette contrée là."

"This is our sorcery!" the modern traveller will say triumphantly as the express dashes by the waterside, drawing its white pennant of steam athwart the sombre slopes of the Jura. If he have in his hours of idleness made acquaintance with any of the Middle Age trials for witchcraft, he may summon the thought of Boguet, that terrible enemy of sorcerers, who laboured to cleanse the Jura range from loupgarous and wizards by flames worse than those of their lord Satan. Three hundred thousand sworn soldiers of the Devil he declared to exist in France, bound to the enemy by infernal spells and pacts. Yet how small a force that would be to meet our modern magicians! How that instrument of bygone superstition would, we think, have recoiled before the marvels of our science! We may have cholera and influenza, but surely we hope the epidemic demonopathy of the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries has disappeared before civilization.

Our readers will be startled to hear, nevertheless, that what our ancestors believed to be true demoniacal possession still exists; nor are its phenomena yet explained by science. In face of the classic ground where Gibbon and Rousseau lived, there is a mountain valley about nine hours' walk from the lake side, where "possession" has existed for the last eight years in an epidemic form.

Starting from Thonon, and following the course of the river Dranse, a good walker reaches in five hours the ruins of the Abbey d'Aulph, founded in 1107, and until the last century a prosperous Cistercian com-

munity. Legends say that St. Columba formed the first Christian settlement in the valley, and there stemmed the Burgundian heathendom. Two hours farther of rough char road the parish of Morzine opens in the form of a shell, round which rise high mountains, thickly wooded, that close in the village to the south.

Except that it is out of the way of travellers, there is little difference in the circumstances of Morzine to those of the other Savoyard valleys. The life and customs of its inhabitants are those of similarly isolated districts. Its people are even counted rich in contrast with the people of other communes in Haute Savoie. The parish numbers over two thousand souls, who are chiefly occupied in herding cattle, and are almost nomad in their habits, moving from pasture to pasture with their flocks as summertide ebbs and flows. The principal hamlet is about three thousand feet above sea-level; not so high as Chamouni, but the climate is more severe, for the valley opens to the north, and admits chiefly the "bise," a wind that acts notably on the nervous system wherever it prevails. South winds and heat bring clouds that hang sluggishly about the pine-forests and limestone crags, and keep the valley chill, so that no fruit-trees and few vegetables thrive there; yet the health of the people is not deteriorated. Hardly any fevers prevail; there is no cretinism, and the goitre never assumes large dimensions. Though marriages within degrees prohibited by the Roman Catholic Church are in large proportion, there are hardly any deaf and dumb, or blind or deformed persons. The villagers are intelligent, and their honest, frank, and religious character strikes strangers who come among them. Dr. Constans, the Government commissioner, sent to investigate the epidemic that has now distracted Morzine for eight years, says of the population—"Ils ont un air grave et sérieux qui semble un reflet de l'âpre nature qui les entoure, et qui leur imprime une sorte de cachet particulier qui les ferait prendre pour les membres d'une vaste communauté religieuse; leur existence en effet diffère peu de celle d'un couvent."

There was little then in the circumstances of the place or people except perhaps the dominance of religious ideas to account for the events that startled the medical and religious world of France. The parish priest, though he may have had some old-fashioned notions, had proved himself for many years a good and respectable pastor. Since 1707 there had been no talk of sorcery. Tradition reported that in that year Morzine had been afflicted by spells, but that was an idea of the past. Year after year the young men emigrated to the plains in search of work, and brought back to their homes a fair share of money and new lights. The elders fed their flocks and cultivated their coarse and scanty oats and rye; the women bore many children; the parish was quiet and noted for the intelligence and sober piety of its community. The worst said of the people was, that they loved lawsuits, and were obstinate in their quarrels.

In the spring of 1857, the village being in its usual quietude, Peronne

Tavernier, a child ten years old, was engaged in eager preparation for her first communion. She was exceedingly intelligent and sweet-tempered, and a sort of favour had been made in admitting her sooner than her comrades of the same age, to the mystery of the Eucharist. Religious thoughts occupied her, she says, night and day, and she could speak of little but her joy in the prospect of the event that was at hand. One day, it was the 14th of March, as she came out of church after confession, she saw a little girl fall into the river, and felt strange fright and uneasiness at the sight. A few hours afterwards, as she sat at school, she suddenly sank down on the bench, and had to be carried home, where she remained as one dead for some hours. Three or four days later the same thing happened to her in church, and afterwards, the attacks recurred frequently wherever she might be. Again in April, as she and another child, Marie Plagnat, kept their goats on the hill-side, they were both found insensible, clasped in each other's arms. They were carried home, and after an hour, Peronne awoke and asked for bread, which, however, she could not eat. After that the seizures became frequent, and both children were attacked five or six times a day. Symptoms that strangely impressed the bystanders began to manifest themselves. The little girls in their trance used to raise their eyes to heaven; they sometimes stretched out their hands, and appeared to receive a letter. By turns it seemed to give pleasure and to excite horror. Then they made as if they refolded the letter, and returned it to the invisible messenger. On awakening they declared that they had heard from the blessed Virgin, who had shown them a beautiful paradise. When the missive, as they sometimes averred, came from hell, Peronne used to complain with terror of serpents that were twisted round her hat. Day by day the attacks became more remarkable. The children began to gesticulate, to speak incoherently, to utter oaths, and blaspheme all they had been taught to revere. Their limbs were convulsed, so that three men could not hold Peronne in her fits. In their trances they accused men in the village of having bewitched them. Among other predictions, they announced that two other girls, and Peronne's father would be seized as they were, and that he would die. Their predictions were fulfilled.

The next remarkable case was that of Julianne Plagnat, a girl of fifteen. One day, as she was out, she felt a sudden pain in her right leg, above the knee; she looked for the cause, and found a severe cut across her thigh. A convulsion followed, and from that day she was constantly attacked; she declared herself to be possessed of seven devils, and told their names, which corresponded with the names of men who had died in the neighbourhood. She foretold that there would be many afflicted in the village. Her father relates that, having asked her during one of her attacks how she had cut her leg, a devil answered,—

“I cut it with my hatchet.”

“Who—you?”

“Yes. I, the woodman.”



For twelve days many remedies were tried to heal the sore, but none succeeded, till at last the devil spoke again.

"Too many things have been done for the girl; do nothing more, and in forty-eight hours the wound will heal." After the time given there was no trace of the wound.

In the beginning of June, Joseph Tavernier, brother of the first child attacked, fell ill. He was a healthy intelligent boy of twelve, and the premonitory symptoms of pain, loss of appetite, and restlessness that frequently warned others, did not show themselves before he was seized. One day he suddenly seemed scared as one astonished; he took a stick, and going into the middle of a stream close by, he beat the water, and turned over the stones for a quarter of an hour. He allowed himself to be led home afterwards without resistance. Another day, returning from his father's funeral, whose death our readers will remember had been predicted by one of the "possessed," the boy had an attack of the nameless disorder that was rapidly becoming epidemic. Under its influence he ran up a pine-tree about eighty feet high. He is said to have turned down the top shoot, and to have stood on it head downwards, singing and gesticulating. Suddenly he recovered his usual consciousness, and terrified at his position he cried out for help. His elder brother called out—"Devil, enter again quickly into this child, that he may be able to come down." At once the attack recommenced, the boy seemed to lose fear, and came down head foremost as a squirrel might do. We have said that his father's death, and that he should die by the malefice of a sorcerer, had been foretold. Tavernier, however, had no fit of actual convulsions. He became melancholy, and complained that when he was hungry and tried to eat, the devil prevented him from lifting food to his mouth. He closed his teeth when others tried to feed him. After three months he became like a skeleton and died.

One by one fresh cases appeared, more or less different in their phenomena, but tending further to representation of demoniacal possession as it is described in the ritual of the Roman Catholic Church. In eight months twenty-seven persons were under the influence of a disease that the local doctors reported to be abnormal and unaccountable. A physician who went to Morzine, and observed some of the cases that had appeared at this epoch, relates thus an interview that he had with one of the "possessed." We omit some details of his narrative, which are repetitions of Doctor Constans' observations quoted further on.

"The patient was about thirty years old. She was married, and the mother of a family. She was dark in complexion, and of a nervous temperament; her health was good. At the time of my visit she was making preparations for going to Sallanches, a town at some distance, where she was to be sequestered. When I went into her room she was leaning over her baggage. I spoke to her, but she did not reply; soon after her head and upper members became convulsed, and she began to speak in a jerking way. I pinched and pricked her unawares, with a large

needle, as she leant against the table, but she gave no sign of pain. Presently she threw herself on the ground, and rolled about and struck at the furniture and floor with extraordinary violence. Her face was red, her throat swelled; she seemed suffocated. I tried again if she were sensitive to pain, but with the same result as before. She continued to struggle and cry out.

"'I am from Abondance' (a neighbouring parish), said the devil by her mouth. 'I was cast into eternal fire for having eaten meat on a Friday. Yes, I am damned,' he continued. '*Mortuus est damnatus*. I must torment the woman, I must drag her with me.' Then, leaping up, with one bound, the woman, or rather the devil, cried out, 'I died by drowning; the woman must die that way.' She rushed out to throw herself into the river, where once before she had nearly succeeded in destroying herself. Three strong men could hardly hold her back, though in her struggles she seemed to avoid hurting them. At last she desisted, and, leaning against the table, she recommenced her abuse. 'Ah! bearded wretch of a doctor,' she said, 'you want to drive us out of the woman; we fear you not with your medicines. Come, we defy you! See you, wicked unbeliever, what is wanted are prayers, and priests, and bishops, and pious exercises. We are five in this woman. Now there are only two who speak, but it will be very different when she passes into the country where her forefathers are buried, near the church where she knelt innocent: oh, there it is that we will torment her.' The fit left her suddenly, as with the other woman I had seen, and without any pause of transition. She passed her hands through her hair, asked her husband to give her water, and drank a bowl of it. Her replies to my questions were simple and natural. She remembered nothing of what had taken place."

It is curious that every Friday she went to the maire and asked him for bacon, which she ate eagerly and sometimes raw. Our readers will remember that the devil who possessed her had declared himself damned for having eaten meat on Friday.

We do not dwell on the various hallucinations that beset some even of those who were not convulsed among the villagers. There were women who were constantly haunted by a black dog, and a girl declared that she saw a man change into a bird and fly away. Even among bystanders not otherwise affected, there were strange illusions. We do not doubt the good faith with which they aver that the "possessed" hung on the leaves of trees, and passed from branch to branch like birds. We even believe that they did see these wonders, so powerful is the imagination. We doubt not that in their case, as in so many others, belief mastered their senses, and their idea became incarnate to their obedient perceptions. Strange power of the mind that in certain circumstances of great exaltation can produce the impressions of sights and sounds and touches and smells that have no material existence! But, confining ourselves to the narratives of physicians inclined to find a natural cause for the Morzine

disease, there remain enough strange phenomena to explain the terror of the people and the action taken in the first instance by their curé and his assistants, and by even the civil authorities of the commune. We cannot be surprised that the villagers desired, and that their spiritual pastors allowed, the use of exorcisms. Pilgrimages to neighbouring shrines were also tried, and it is said that these remedies were in some cases successful. It is certain that medicine was powerless, and there is curious evidence of increased pain and convulsions when the simplest sedatives, the commonest prescriptions were employed. The people turned eagerly to the best means, as they supposed, of cure for the evil that had beset them. They demanded the rite of exorcism, not only for the "possessed," but for their cattle, their mules, and even their poultry that fell sick. There is a story of a pig that could not by fair or foul means be got to cross the village bridge until a priest came and began the ceremony of exorcism. The stole was laid, as directed, on the animal, which instantly became as docile as his owners wished. Persons at Morzine, worthy of credit, and not believers in demoniacal possession, assert that some cows would not give their milk to women who were affected by the epidemic, while to other hands they yielded plentifully. It is easy to imagine how such incidents, trifling as they seem, added to the public ferment. We have no very detailed account of the progress of the disorder during the languid end of the Sardinian sway in Savoy. The exorcisms practised by the curé were forbidden by Monseigneur Rendu, the bishop of the diocese, a name known to Alpine explorers as that of the first intelligent observer of glacier motion. We can fancy the scientific prelate saying to the priest of Morzine, as, in the 17th century, the Cardinal de Lyon said to Barré, the curé of Chinon, "*Ne voyez-vous pas que quand bien même ces filles ne seraient pas possédées elles croiraient l'être sur votre parole ?*" But the bishop fell ill, the doctors of the neighbourhood confessed their powerlessness, and the Turin Government was deaf to any demand for medical inquiry. The public of Morzine, left to their own devices, determined on having a general exorcism. It was attempted with all the usual ceremonies. The adjurations, sufficiently fearful at any time, were being fervently repeated, when a terrible explosion interrupted the exorcists. The officiating clergy were assailed by blasphemies and invectives, and a scene of convulsions, equal to any recorded during the middle ages, followed.

As might have been feared, the epidemic increased rapidly after this attempt to stay it. The unfortunate people fell into a state of extreme depression, and the few visitors who tried to rouse them from their fear were hooted as "*rouges*" or unbelievers. Convinced that the state of their wives and daughters resulted from the spells of sorcerers, even the elders of the parish began to wish the punishment of certain persons whom they suspected of pacts with Satan. Four or five men had been denounced by the "possessed," and at last public opinion ran so high that the life of one of the supposed wizards was in continual danger. He was

a fat elderly shoemaker, Jean Berger by name, and by no means represented the ideal sorcerer. However, on one occasion he was hunted for three hours by a mob armed with scythes and axes, and with great difficulty escaped from their fury. A miller was also suspected of malefice, and he was obliged to shut up his mill. Even the most sensible men in the village did not scruple to tell strangers that Morzine would have no peace until two or three magicians were burned on the fair green.

The chief object of dislike was, however, a certain disrobed priest, who was born at Morzine, and had earned there the worst possible reputation. He was readily fixed on as the chief and instigator of the local sorcerers. It was remembered that on the occasion of an attempt he had made to return to Morzine some time before the "possession" began, he had been refused admission to the parish. He had retreated to Montriond, the next village, and had there begun to build a little chapel by the side of a mountain lake, but he had left it unfinished and had gone to live near Geneva, where he made a suspicious livelihood by selling herbs and minerals from the Savoy mountains. He had been heard to say, on leaving Morzine, "I leave them a thorn in their side which they will not be rid of easily." His death was resolved on by the Morzinois: for, once rid of him, they hoped to turn at its source the flood of evil that had come upon them. To effect their end they tried a spell of counter sorcery that sounds strangely in our modern ears. They disembowelled a dog in the middle of the disrobed abbé's ruined chapel, and taking out its liver they cut it in seventeen places with a sword. They then buried it with solemn maledictions. In seventeen days they expected that their enemy would be dead, and they would be freed from this legion of devils; but, on the contrary, in seventeen days fresh cases of convulsions broke out with increased violence, and one woman declared that the soul of the abbé had entered into her stomach and there tormented her with grievous clawing.

Meantime France had annexed Savoy, and the great nation, as we know, interested herself in her new province. Dr. Arthaud, a distinguished Lyons physician skilled in mental disease, was commissioned to inquire into the causes and symptoms of the Morzine epidemic. In a very interesting report he recapitulated the facts that we have rapidly sketched, and noted as chiefly remarkable and as certainly existing:—

The abnormal development of muscular force.

The intellectual excitement producing marvellous lucidity of thought and correctness of language.

The cries, blasphemies, and imprecations that increased at the approach of a priest, or at church, or during exorcisms.

The impressions produced at great distances on the senses.

The designation of persons who were said to cause the disease by touch or glance.

The prediction by the sick of the term of their illness.

Their various hallucinations and demoniacal delirium.

The personation of the evil spirits by the patients, who spoke of themselves in the third person always.

Dr. Arthaud examined and analysed cases and tried medicines in vain. He went away leaving no greater consolation to the afflicted souls than that they were a prey to epidemic "hystero-demonopathy."

But what is demonopathy the Morzinois might reasonably have asked? What was it that had come to their valley? Healthy and pious mothers, some with child, some nursing, uttered blasphemies and used language which Wapping would stare at. Respectable girls blasphemed all they believed most sacred. Persons notorious for devotion found that their lips refused to pray, and that through some mysterious influence communion was impossible. Children grew strangely and irrepressibly insolent. A general moral disorganization had changed all the habits of the village. Why had this happened at Morzine? The people of the neighbouring parish were entirely exempt, though its chalets were within a stone's throw of houses that had been visited by this spiritual plague. After Dr. Arthaud's unavailing visit the attention of all who interest themselves in the marvellous was aroused. Believers in "Spiritism," of whom there are more among all classes in France than we in England imagine, began to make Morzine a theme for their discourses. Men of science were interested in the facts. Writers of history, who have to explain the demonology of the past, caught at this reproduction of its phenomena; and the anxious souls, who seem to think that Christianity needs fresh proofs, were eager to twist the events at Morzine each after his fashion.

France resolved to throw fresh floods of Parisian light on the mountain valley without delay. On the 26th of April, 1861, Dr. Constans, inspector-general of lunatics, arrived at Morzine, determined to restore the due order of a Savoyard commune—

De par science défense à Dieu

De faire miracle en ce lieu.

He found a hundred and twenty cases of "possession." Immediately he applied himself to observe scientifically sixty-four of them. His account is detailed and interesting, and he successfully disposes of some marvellous stories firmly believed by the people. He does not, however, we think, sufficiently account for what he himself admits, by the physical causes he assigns. He gives us a table of the ages and circumstances of the sixty-four *possédées* that came under his observation. Of them three were children, sixteen were married, and two were widows. Thirty were of various ages, from twenty-five to fifty-eight. He puts in a different category four men who were attacked by very similar symptoms. Age, therefore, had little to do with the seizures, nor does it appear that any physical circumstances specially determined or alleviated the convulsive attacks. In some cases they were, it is true, preceded by internal pain, by loss of appetite, and digestive disturbance; but the sick imagination of the "possessed" probably produced sensations that could not otherwise be

explained in the excellent state of their physical health. We find a spoonful of water producing "atrocious pain." A woman, who imagined herself bewitched by wine given her by one of the suspected sorcerers, for a year afterwards daily vomited what she declared to be the same wine, nor could she get rid of its taste. The "possession" appears to have caused impressions peculiar to other disorders, but we cannot find that any known disorder determined the "possession." Dr. Constans notes among other phenomena that, if questioned, the diseased persons replied to the thoughts which they attributed to the questions, and to the objections that they foresaw he would make, but their sayings were always in reference to their dominant idea. The spirits whom they supposed spoke by their mouth seem generally to have once tenanted human beings, and sometimes related what they used to do on earth, and what they had since done in hell, &c.

Dr. Constans describes as marvellous their acrobatic feats: he says, "They turn over and over in one bound, and sometimes leaping like a steel spring let go, they fling themselves back, so that head and feet touch the floor together."

"The attack lasts," he continues, "from ten minutes to half an hour; the pulse is not quickened, but rather becomes slow and weak, and the extremities grow cold, notwithstanding the violent blows they strike." The extreme regard to decency of the women, and the absence of the sensual ideas which were so general in the witch sabbaths and sorceries of earlier times, is remarkable.

Dr. Constans observed that the insensibility to pain of the convulsed persons was not accompanied by general failure of perception. He, as well as the other physicians who visited them, thrust pins under their nails, and in other sensitive parts of their body, without causing pain. At the same time the organs of sight and hearing were excited in the sick persons to extraordinary keenness. There is a case reported of one, who being at Geneva, whither she had gone in search of cure, heard, at a distance of thirty-five miles at least, the bells of Morzine ringing. She announced that they sounded for the christening of the doctor's baby, without any previous knowledge of the fact. The memory of the "possessed" is also marvellously developed. Many of them were said to have spoken foreign languages—some English, some German, one used the Auvergnat dialect of French, and another was believed to discourse in Arabic. It is probable that they recalled phrases that had been accidentally printed on their brain on some forgotten occasion, and that reproduced themselves during the unnatural condition of the faculties in the "possessed." The invulnerableness of their skin was yet more extraordinary; notwithstanding the severe treatment it received in the attacks of those diseased, it was seldom bruised or cut. A Genevese clergyman assures us that he saw a child ten years' old fall seventeen feet from a loft to the stone-floor below without the slightest injury. Our readers will remember that a similar phenomenon was manifested, in a degree that seems



incredible, by the celebrated convulsionnaires of St. Médard. It was made a ground of accusation in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. We do not know that any physiological explanation has been given of it.

The consternation that such facts created at Morzine can be imagined. In vain Dr. Constans—who seems to have been given absolute discretionary power by the French Government—dispersed the worst cases to hospitals in other districts; in vain he overawed the parish authorities by a brigade of forty gendarmes and a detachment of infantry. He tried the effect of their drums and fifes, and caused the curé to be changed, and threatened all who dared to have a fit in public with punishment. Like failure followed each of his measures. During his presence for a few months the disease appeared to smoulder; but the following year fresh and furious outbreaks, suggestive of the presence of yet more cruel devils, took place, to the consternation of the administration, lay and ecclesiastical, of the Haute Savoie. The Morzinois must not, we think, be accused of extraordinary scepticism if they thought that medicine could do little for them; or of weak credulity, if they believed that spiritual means could best meet the spiritual evil. Several cures seem to have been obtained throughout the epidemic by the use of private exorcisms, discouraged, it is true, by the Bishop of Annecy, but practised by the Capuchins of St. Maurice. We can well believe that the fearful adjurations of the Ritual had power to kill or cure a convulsive patient—the whole ceremony is impressive even on the strongest minds; but it is plain that its repetition worked on the devout peasants of Morzine until they seem to have changed their Christian faith for a sort of demon propitiation. In their excitement they demanded a “mission” to revive their courage, and the Annecy authorities permitted one to be held in the afflicted valley during the summer of 1863. As usually happened after any religious ceremony of a public solemn nature, fresh evil followed. Within a week of the sermons and public meetings presided over by the reverend fathers of the mission, eighty cases of convulsions were numbered. The scenes that followed were more dreadful than ever. The newly organized authorities were powerless before an evil that seemed without remedy, and that might be propagated indefinitely through the nervous and credulous population of the Haute Savoie as the renown of it spread.

As soon as the winter snows allowed, the préfet of the department determined to visit the scene of this disorder. In March, 1864, he went to Morzine, determined to try what plain speaking and common sense could do. He called together in a room some of the women subject to convulsions, and exhorted them quietly to try and return to their former pious and regular habits. They listened attentively until, at a given moment, some chance word excited them. They all fell into simultaneous convulsions, and surrounding the préfet, who, our readers will remember, is a very great personage in his department, they assailed him with abuse, oaths, and blasphemies. They kicked and struck him, and made as if they would tear him to pieces, and leaped with unnatural

strength high in the air, foaming at the mouth, and contorting their bodies as no one had ever seen before. The few gendarmes present tried to help their préfet, but they were overborne. A spectator assures us that the women lifted these strong men as they would have lifted infants, and pinned them against the walls of the room, pressing their nails against the flesh of the men's faces. It is singular that no scratch was inflicted by them, notwithstanding the force they used. Their muscles appeared to be perfectly under the control of the will that possessed them; their preternatural strength seemed nicely regulated as the soft touch of a healthy finger. With great difficulty the préfet struggled for a time against his possessed subjects; then, at a bound, one after another they all sprang through a window and disappeared. The préfet made little delay in leaving Morzine. We have heard that the calmest and strongest men received an impression of singular uneasiness after having witnessed an attack of these convulsions. A Roman Catholic priest, well used to common illness, has told us that, having been present at a convulsion in one of the Morzine women who had come to Geneva, he was conscious of unusual nervousness for some hours afterwards.

The experience of the préfet did not deter Monseigneur Maginn, who had succeeded Rendu in the bishopric of Annecy, from visiting Morzine in the course of his pastoral tour. He arrived there in the April following the préfet's discomfiture, with the usual suite of ecclesiastics who attend their chief on such occasions from parish to parish. There had been no confirmation in the valley for some years, and the bishop resolved to try the spiritual effects of that sacrament on some of the "possessed." We may say, by the way, that the excellent and enlightened prelate had, throughout, discountenanced exorcisms. He is a man of great firmness and good sense, and up to this date he is one of those French bishops who have not published, in their dioceses, the late encyclical letter from Rome.

There was of course a full attendance at the high-mass he celebrated. Their bishop was a beloved and venerated object to the people of Morzine, and we can imagine the respect and awe his presence, in full pontifical dress, must have commanded. Much was hoped from the moral effect of his visit and the influence of confirmation; but what that influence produced we translate from the letter of a trustworthy spectator. It was published in the *Union Médicale* of the second of July, 1864:—

"22nd May, 1864.

"DEAR FRIEND,—I went, after all, on the first of May, to see the celebrated 'possessed' at Morzine; and I can assure you I have not lost my time. My imagination could never have conceived so horrible a sight. I was at Morzine at half-past six in the morning. The ceremony began at seven o'clock. I had not been five minutes in the church when a poor young girl fell at my feet in horrible convulsions. Four men could not hold her. She struck the floor with her feet, her hands, and her head as fast as the roll of a drum. Then another was seized, and again another. The church became a perfect hell. Nothing

was heard but cries, blows, oaths, and blasphemies, that made one's hair stand on end. It was the bishop's entrance that particularly set all the people agog. Blows with the fist, kicks, spitting, horrible contortions, handfuls of hair and caps flung about, torn clothes, bleeding hands, met everywhere my ears and eyes. The most frightful moments were at the elevation of the host, and at the benediction of the holy sacrament after vespers, as well as when the bishop first appeared. It was so dreadful that the bystanders were all in tears. The victims of the disease, above a hundred in number, seemed to fall into simultaneous convulsions without any previous warning. The noise was perfectly infernal. Within a radius of two yards I counted eleven. The greater number were young girls and women from fifteen to thirty years old. There was a child of ten, five or six old women, and two men. The bishop confirmed some of them, whether they would or no. As soon as he came in front of them they were seized; but by the help of the gendarmes and some men who assisted he put his hands on them, even in the midst of their fearful maledictions. 'Damned carrion of a bishop,' they said, 'why dost thou come to torment us?' They tried to strike and bite him and to tear off his episcopal ring (which we have heard was actually trampled under foot). They spit in his face; but it was noteworthy that when the bishop touched their heads in confirmation they sank down, and remained in a stupor that seemed like deep sleep. During the sermon, when any one was seized with a convulsion, the bishop stopped, and making the sign of the cross, he said, '*In nomine Christi tace et obmutesce.*' The effect was invariably good. Near me was a young and pretty woman of eighteen. She had been married a year, and had been a mother for two months. After having been confirmed, lying in the arms of her father, her brother, and her husband, who all wept bitterly, she cried out, 'Ah, damned carrion of a bishop, thou makest me depart. I who was so happy in this body on the earth. How dreadful to have to return to hell.' Then, after a pause, 'And I, also, I must go. I must leave this fair body, where I was so well off. But when I go, I have five more, and among them an old devil. It is not to-day that they will depart.' I took the woman by her hand, and questioned her in Latin and other languages; but she did not reply. The brigadier of the gendarmes having come forward to stop her talking, 'Ah, carrion of a brigadier,' she cried, 'I know thee, thou art an unbeliever. Thou art a — Thou art mine.' The brigadier turned pale, and fell back. The gendarmes were all so terrified that every moment they made the sign of the cross.

"I stayed at Morzine until Monseigneur left, that is to say, till half-past six in the evening. The poor bishop was utterly dispirited. Two or three '*possédées*' were brought to him in the sacristy, but he could do nothing. On my return I found one by the side of the road. I questioned her also in foreign language, but she got angry, and replied by a handful of gravel, which she flung in my face, telling me that I only went once a year to mass, and that I was a busybody."

The complete failure of episcopal influence threw the Government back on the help of medical science. Dr. Constans had, since his first visit, published a report, in which he held out hopes of cure if his advice were strictly followed. He was again commissioned to do what he could for Morzine. Armed with the powers of a dictator he returned there, and backed by a fresh detachment of sixty soldiers, a brigade of gendarmes and a fresh curé, he issued despotic decrees, and threatened lunatic asylums, and in any case deportation for the convulsed. He fined any person who accused others of magic, or in any way encouraged the prevalent idea of supernatural evil. He desired the curé to preach sermons against the possibility of demoniacal possession, but this order could not well be carried out by even the most obedient priest.

The persons affected with fits were dispersed in every direction. Some were sent to asylums and hospitals, and many were simply exiled from the Chablais. They are not allowed to revisit even for a day their homes except by very special favour. The existing health of the exiles is, of course, not well known, but we have heard of many who have attacks even now when they are far from Morzine. Four or five who were unfortunately kept together in an Annecy hospital, set on the chaplain, a priest who attempted to exorcise them, and ill-treated him after the fashion in which they had dealt with his bishop.

Whether fear has helped to stay the spiritual plague, as undoubtedly fear helped to produce it, remains to be proved; at present the urgent pressure put by the French Government on the people of Morzine seems to have scotched the snake. There have been no cases of convulsion for four months. The soldiers have been withdrawn, much regretted by the villagers, to whom they made themselves as agreeable as Dr. Constans hoped they would. As we write the brigadier of the gendarmes is on his way back from Grenoble, whither he had gone to be decorated for his courage and good conduct. The maire and the special Government commissioner find their time hang heavy for lack of fresh cases of the "hystero-demonopathy." Visitors to the place, curious of information, are, we think, wisely discouraged; quacks and charlatans are not allowed admission to the commune. Let us hope that this summer may see no fresh outbreak of a disorder so dreadful, in that it appears to "kill the soul" even more than it weakens the body.

We need not point out the salient facts of our narrative, or discuss the various theories that have been invented to account for them. We have described no incident that cannot be compared and measured with phenomena recorded in earlier centuries. It is impossible not to see the resemblance of the Morzine epidemic with the demonopathy of the sixteenth century, and with the history of the Jansenist and Cevennes convulsionnaires. Some of the facts we have related are observed in the state of hypnotism or nervous sleep with which physicians are familiar. The hallucinations of which we have given some instances, are too common to astonish us. But the likeness of this epidemic to others that have been

observed, does not account for its symptoms. The resemblance of its phenomena to some already witnessed does not, after all, explain them. Can physiologists give the reasons for an insensibility that is accompanied by such remarkable development of muscular energy? Can they account for a preternatural acuteness of the senses; can any physical explanation tell us why the moral marvel exists of virtue turning to vice, and piety to hatred of God?

We have repeatedly inquired of persons familiar with the events at Morzine, if there could be any want of good faith in the patients whose symptoms contradicted received medical experience. With one accord it is agreed that there is no sort of acting among any of those afflicted. Nothing can be more terribly real than the trouble that has befallen them.

The medical opinions that have as yet been pronounced on the Morzine evil, seem to us remarkably vague. This harlequin malady unites symptoms of hysteria, epilepsy, mania, and gastric disturbance; and yet some principal features accompanying usually each of these diseases are wanting. The excellent health of the "possessed" between their seizures seems to point out that there is no great physical mischief at work. A physician reports of the women whose cases he observed, "They were fat and fresh-looking, enjoying to the full their physical and moral faculties. It was impossible on seeing them to imagine the existence of the slightest illness.

Had we space, it would be interesting to trace the strange influence of credulity on our perceptions. We have related facts that have been solemnly attested by grave persons of good faith at Morzine. Let not our readers be startled if we readily admit that such of those facts as trench on the supernatural, might be proved on analysis never to have had any existence except in the minds of those who believed they witnessed them. But "possession" is not more curious as a disease than the existence of epidemic illusions, such as we believe broke out at St. Médard among the Camisards of the Cevennes, and now at Morzine, when a whole population testifies to marvels. Has this frequent disorder of human perception been sufficiently examined? We do not set down those who believe in spiritist and other marvels as knaves or fools, but as victims of a very common disturbance of the faculties that we think deserves serious attention from all interested in the search of truth. We need not the Morzine evidence to remind us that nothing is less certain than any given observation, unless the organs of observation be specially sound and in high training; and to accept any fact as certain we must have other witness to it than that of our senses. The Chablais epidemic leads us into questions that concern us deeply, for it not only exhibits curious phenomena in those actually convulsed, but it also warns us of the remarkable liability to error of our perceptions when they are swayed by foregone conclusions.

## Misogyny.

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BACCIO, in painting the almost ineffable horrors of the famous plague at Florence, could find no horror surpassing or even equalling that involved in the nearly universal abandonment of the malady-stricken husbands by the terror-stricken wives. In his mind, this was the most appalling feature of the terrible visitation. How great, then, the worth of the conjugal tie in the estimation of the author of the *Decameron*! How large the value he assigned to the tender offices of woman! We turn to the *Decameron* itself, in which we find limned at full length a model wife, according to the writer's notions of such a piece of perfection. Such a real domestic treasure, we are informed, is "young and beautiful in her person, mistress of her needle, *no man-servant waiting better at her master's table, no merchant better versed in accounts!*" Well might he deplore the flight at a season of calamity of personages so invaluable as the one thus described, so exemplary each in attending to the wants of her master and his guests during their festal hours, and discharging besides the onerous and important duties attached to the dignified office of *maitre d'hôtel*. At the approach of the plague the menial underlings fled by scores; but the calamity only reached its height when the wife, the chief menial of all, the excellent attendant on the dinner-table, the accountant so useful in managing the household finances, imitated the base example, and took to her heels as well.

But do not let us fall foul of Boccaccio until we have ascertained there have not been others who—and perhaps in a less complimentary form—have depreciated quite as much, not to say a great deal more, the merits of womankind. Goldastus tells a comical story of a certain abbot who held women and apples in equal aversion; in aversion so great as that when travelling, if at any inn he had purposed to abide he met with either, on no consideration would he stay, but insisted on proceeding forthwith on his journey. This reverend father, troubled, it is clear, with none of Bishop Colenso's scruples, could not forgive Eve her delinquency, and hated her daughters for her sake, while the very instrument of her temptation shared in his abhorrence. However, as his priestly condition compelled him to celibacy, the ladies of his time could afford to meet his despicable prejudice with derisive contempt. The memory of Eve encounters much harder usage at the hands of the Talmudists, who deny altogether she was created out of the rib of Adam, assigning to her an origin infinitely less honourable. If we are to credit the Rabbinical writers, the rib, after having been extracted from the side of the father of all living, was suffered to remain unused for a time, and



excited the cupidity of a mischievous, malignant monkey, who watching his opportunity, snatched up the prize and hurried off with it at express speed. The angel, whose business it was to have watched the treasure, and who was unfortunately caught napping, hastened at a terrible pace in pursuit of the audacious thief, but in vain; the pilferer got clear off with his booty, leaving, however, his ungainly caudal appendage in the hard grasp of his pursuer: it was out of his tail, and not the Adamite rib, that, in the belief of the Jewish doctors, Eve was manufactured.

No marvel, then, that the Jew Henderson met with in Russia should morning, noon, and night, have returned thanks to Heaven he had not been born a woman. Few would like to trace up their pedigree to a monkey; still fewer to that ungainly member of his person to which the Talmudists referred the origin of Eve. The philosophers of antiquity, one and all, held woman in slender esteem; but it should be remembered that those who saw in her only a development of a fish, considered also that man, her hereditary lord and master, had himself also an ichthyc origin, and that his real progenitors were finny denizens of the great deep. Heretics in the early ages of the Church were found who dogmatically denied to woman the possession of the attributes of humanity, and affirmed that in reality she was nothing better than a brute beast,—having, like some brute beasts, such as the chimpanzee and the gorilla, a certain hideous resemblance to mankind, with whom she had really nothing else in common. Such prevalence did this monstrous doctrine acquire, that, in the fifth century, a council of the Church was summoned at Macon, formally to condemn it and anathematize its supporters. But even in the council were divines to be found who gave to the abominable heresy a sort of qualified approval, contending, upon what grounds it is useless now to conjecture, that the salvation which came by the cross was limited to man alone, and that for woman Christ did not die. It was only after long and anxious debate, this pestilent dogma received its fitting censure. St. Augustine's notions on the matter may be inferred from the singular opinion which he maintains in his famous treatise *De Civitate Dei*, where he contends that, at the resurrection, womankind will be wanting, but that all who rise will rise as males. The great logomach of Hippo, it is known, was largely infected with the spurious Platonism of his time, and his judgment on this subject was probably influenced in some degree by the teaching of Plato, that man was created double at first, and that the sexes being separated, afterwards, by an irresistible impulse, were ever attempting to restore their primitive union; woman, since her elimination from man, having become inferior not only to him, but even to the bestial creation itself. Aristotle, whom those misogynists the Jews used to claim as a Jew—an honour, we will undertake to say, he never thought of, and never would have desired—is still more severe on the sex. Woman, in his belief, was a mistake altogether. She ought never to have been permitted to disgrace the earth with her presence. She was

an incomplete, unfinished, production altogether; a bungled piece of goods; a discredit to mankind amongst whom she was cast. She was worse than useless; she was positively mischievous. On certain days, if she was abroad, the atmosphere became tainted on her appearance, liquors became corrupted, the milk curdled, the cream acquired the flavour of verjuice, the melon withered, the mirror was sullied in reflecting her visage, sterility followed her footsteps, animals became mad on her approach, and the sight of her called forth a plentiful crop of snakes. Much of this rhodomontade certainly is due not to Aristotle himself, but to his followers; still, his hostility to woman is an ascertained fact, and his disciples only improved on the doctrine of their master.

Amauri, a famous doctor of Paris, who flourished at the beginning of the twelfth century, was of these disciples the most renowned, and drew down on himself the censure of the papal chair, then filled by Innocent III. His own bishop, scandalised at his heterodoxy, convoked a synod and summoned him to attend and receive the sentence it should pass on him; but Amauri died before the synod had concluded its deliberations. Resolved not wholly to be cheated of their prey, the assembled fathers decreed that the corpse of the scandaliser of woman should forthwith be exhumed, and publicly dragged, with every mark of indignity, through the principal streets of Paris—a decree which was executed in its fulness, greatly, no doubt, to the satisfaction of the fair Parisians, who must have felt their wrongs revenged, and their rightful position in the order of beings effectually vindicated by the extremely decorous proceeding. Amauri's death, and his post-mortem punishment, did not, however, put an end to his heresy. He left behind him numerous and devoted believers in his doctrines, and many of these, by order of the Council of Paris, were brought to the stake in 1210 and duly roasted alive, that men should know the fair sex was not to be depreciated with impunity. These Parisian theologians were decidedly men of gallantry, as behoved them; and had Goldastus's abbot lived in their days, they would, without doubt, have subjected him to the *baptême de feu*, and very likely, with that grim pleasantry which used sometimes to characterize ecclesiastics addicted to the use of the faggot in the suppression of condemnable opinions, they would have roasted one of his detested apples along with him.

But conspicuous as was Parisian gallantry on this interesting occasion, it must not be forgotten that that antique code, the *coutume de Paris*, recognized that most ungallant dogma, *du côté de la barbe est la puissance*: a dogma involving such an indignity to womanhood at large as to provoke the indignation of Madame de Thou, mother of the famous historian, who was accustomed to declare, *qu'elle aurait volontiers donné la moitié de son bien pour pouvoir être homme*—a dogma worthy only of Mahomedan barbarians, who look upon women with contempt and beards with reverence. It is their conviction, as we read in the memoirs of the Chevalier d'Avoieux, that every separate hair of *la barbe* has an angel detached for the sole and especial purpose of its protection; and so,

when your Mussulman combs his beard and some hairs chance to be abstracted in the process, he considerably breaks each eliminated filament, and carefully buries it, in order that its guardian angel may at once understand it has no further occasion for his services. What marvel, then, that woman with beardless chin (though Margaret of Parma boasted the possession of a majestic beard, and attributed to its influence much of the success of her administration of the Netherlands) should be held in low esteem where the beard was believed an object of angelic care and solicitude. Van Helmont, as we know, viewed the matter in a different light, and considered that the beard was given to Adam after the fall by way of punishment, in order that he should look as much like a beast as possible.

The verdict of mankind in general has, however, gone in favour of the beard, and beardless woman has been the victim of the unfortunate prejudice. It had something to do, perhaps, with the opinion, long entertained and supported by authorities of the greatest eminence, that women are naturally given to sorcery, and that a familiarity with the magical arts is far more common among their sex than that of the men. Witches, say the misogynists, are infinitely more numerous than wizards, and they support their position by citing the testimony of Pierre Delamere, of Bordeaux, the most celebrated writer on demonology which the sixteenth century produced, fertile as it was in writers of that description. And Jean Bodin, the renowned publicist, certifies to the same effect, both these demonographs concurring in the statement that, when once a woman comes to an understanding with the devil, the most disastrous consequences may be expected. It was for this reason that, in early times in England, the few married clergy were viewed by the mass of the people with mixed fear and dislike. Being married, it was supposed that, through the agency of their wives, they were peculiarly subject to demoniac influence, and therefore disqualified properly to teach and guide their flocks. Archaeologists, by scores, have been puzzled to explain the notion which long haunted the public mind in this country that it augured ill for a matrimonial alliance if the bride, at the wedding, did not weep profusely. But the *rationale* of the opinion will not remain doubtful if we recollect that, according to the best authorities, no witch can shed more than three tears in succession, and those she can shed only from the left eye. The copious weeping of the new-made wife thus gave assurance to the husband and his friends that she at least had not previously plighted her troth to Satan, and was, in spite of the proclivities of her sex, no conjuror. In after-times, the misogynists appear to have considered tears themselves as instruments whereby sorceresses strove to exercise their diabolical arts, and realize their selfish purposes. In the drama we often find reflected the popular sentiment, and so it may not be out of place here to remark that, in an old play, preserved in Dodsley's collection, a painted cloth—one of those economical substitutes for tapestry with which our ancestors used to cover the nakedness of their walls (see II. *Hen. IV.*,

act ii. sc. i.)—is represented as having inscribed on it these slanderous lines:—

Trust not a woman when she cries,  
For she'll pump water from her eyes  
With a wet finger, and in faster showers  
Than April when he rains down flowers.

Although one of the *dramatis personæ*, who is certainly no misogynist, very sensibly observes, on this doggrel, "Ay but, George, that painted cloth is worthy to be hanged for lying," there is no doubt it gave faithful expression to that vulgar prejudice against womankind to which, with all their mock gallantry, our ancestors were prone.\*

Whilst on the subject of tears, we may remark that the antipathy of the Jewish professors to women is oddly enough evinced in one of their glosses on the Book of Genesis. In this they contend that Abraham shed but few tears on the death of Sarah, inasmuch as she had grown old, and that, as a consequence, he was not altogether sorry to get rid of her. That his tears were scanty, they conclude from the fact that the letter *Caph*, which is used in describing his weeping, is a remarkably small letter, and, being a small letter, could only be used with propriety in the description of a small thing; and, accordingly, the thing described being the weeping, that weeping must have been small, as the letter certainly is! In their own peculiar logic, these Judaical casuists would beat Suarez to shivers! Their misogyny here exhibits itself in an aspect more than ordinarily revolting, for it discovers a repugnance not merely to a sex, but especially to that portion of a sex rendered venerable by age, and whose very weakness should most powerfully attract our sympathies. It is significant that the reverence the Jews habitually pay to gray hairs, and which forms a conspicuous element in the national character, should be suspended when they shadow the brow of a woman. Read what that hearty "true-born Englishman," Daniel Defoe, writes about old women in his *Protestant Monastery*. "If any whimsical or ridiculous story is told, 'tis of an old woman. If any person is awkward in his business or anything else, he is called an old woman, forsooth! Those were brave days for young people, when they would swear the old ones out of their

\* An imaginative contributor to the *Antiquarian Repertory* professes to have discovered somewhat singular evidence of the superior gallantry of our early ancestors over their immediate successors, and the revival of a respect for woman in a still later age. "I have observed," he says, "that on most of the engraved brass-plates laid over gravestones, where they represent a man and his wife, among the ancient ones, the lady takes the right hand of her husband; but in those of more modern date, the husband lies on the right of his wife." The "reason why" of this change he explains by adding that "when the high honours paid to the fair sex began to go out of fashion, the husbands seized the opportunity to assert their superiority, and their wives were removed from the place of honour which the male sex for many years maintained." Subsequently, as he tells us, this outrageous wrong was, in some degree, redressed, seeing that "all public addresses to a mixed assembly of both sexes, till sixty years ago, commenced, 'Gentlemen and Ladies!' while, at present (1808), it is 'Ladies and Gentlemen!'"

lives, and get a woman hanged or burnt, only for being a little too old, and as a warning to all ancient persons who should dare to live longer than the young ones think convenient." Singular, indeed, it is, that these scribes, conversant, no doubt, with their country's history, should have forgotten that "when," to use the language of Alfred de Vigny, "there were no brave men in Israel, Deborah arose!"

Earlier than the days of Martial down to the very present, the fool's sneer, the scoff of "shallow jesters and rash bavin wits" have been levelled at woman's vanity, her love of dress and luxury, and preference of outward beauty to inward excellence. Lycoris, with her tinted cheeks—rouge-pots have been found at Herculaneum; *Ægle*, with her false teeth; Polla burying her wrinkles beneath a layer of bean-paste; Galla retiring to rest, having deposited her upruchased charms and artificial loveliness in a hundred boxes:—gibes and taunts like these have gratified the misogynist's spite in many an age. It is in vain to remind the snarlers that, from the remotest antiquity, the idea of goodness has always associated itself with that of beauty, and that when the sculptor's chisel and the painter's brush have been called on to image vice and wickedness, they have ever represented them under the guise of physical deformity and outward hideousness. To those conversant with the history of art, it is unnecessary to add that, both in classical and mediæval times, the artist, in representing evil demons varying in the degree of their malignity and diabolism, ever figured the evillest spirit as the most ugly. In this, surely we discover a sufficient reason that woman should not be indifferent to her personal appearance. When Baptista Porta, one of the most learned men of his time, had to seek a patron to whom to dedicate his greatest work, he chose the Cardinal J. D'Este, and chose him solely because of his beauty. See in what a sarcastic spirit Paradin, in his *Chronique de Savoye*, is careful to inform the world, to whom it mattered not one jot, that a certain Greek duchess of Vienna was not only so dainty as to suck her food through tubes of gold, but so anxious for her complexion as to bathe herself frequently in dew! The harsh Earl of Shrewsbury was content enough to play the gaoler to Mary Queen of Scots, but was evidently annoyed at her favourite practice of taking a bath of wine. In what a tone of grave irony does Sir Francis Knollys write to the secretary Cecil—men with hearts hard as the nether millstone—how the poor Queen, a fugitive from her rebellious subjects, and a suppliant of her deadliest enemy, concerned herself on her arrival at Carlisle with the important matter of her head-dress, how she "praysed Mystres Marye Ceaton" for being "the fynest busker, that is to say, the fynest dresser of a woman's heade or heare, that is to be seen in any cuntrye," and how, "every other day hitherto she hathe a new devyce of head-dressyng!" We find a certain celebrated lady—Charlotte Elizabeth of Bavaria, second Duchess of Orleans—affectedly depreciating her own outward presentment, but who believes she was in earnest? Writing in 1718, she thus pictures her person, "I

must certainly be monstrous ugly. I never had a good feature. My eyes are small, my nose short, my lips broad and thin. These are not materials to form a beautiful face. Then, I have flabby, lank cheeks, and long features which suit ill with my low stature. My waist and legs are equally clumsy. Undoubtedly, I must appear to be an odious little wretch." This enumeration of defects is too minute and exact to permit us to believe the writer accounted them as such, and the catalogue appears to us an elaborate piece of detestable affectation. Olivia, in the "schedule" of her charms (*Twelfth Night*, act i. scene v.), is equally depreciatory; but Olivia had had too recent proof of the potency of her beauty to doubt its reality, and had, certainly, at the time she spoke, no intention that its reality should be doubted by her handsome auditor. Was this Bavarian princess one whit more candid?

Women's fondness for gauds and finery has not, of course, escaped the notice of censorious criticism; and the instances of its malice in this direction are as numerous as the leaves at Valombrosa. Harpsfield, a sour old monk and chronicler, that is a recorder of incredible legends and monstrous lies, tells a pretty tale of a certain saint, one St. Ethelreda, better known as St. Audrey, who died of a swelling in the throat, and piously refers the source of her malady to her wickedness in early life, when she was mightily given to the wearing of smart necklaces. The crabbed old priest did not know that, originally, the necklace, or collar, was only a mark of rank or distinction, and afterwards was worn as an amulet or charm against disease, and that it should have brought on the mumps, as he pretends, is nothing better than a gigantic fib. Selden, a thorough misogynist, as became his Puritanical humour, and as his *Uxor Hebraica* sufficiently shows, has his fling at the sex, remarking that "it is reason a man that will have a wife should be at the charge of her trinkets, and pay all the scores she sets on him. He that will keep a monkey, it is fit he should pay for the glasses he breaks." Bunyan said nothing worse than this when he disabled woman's judgment by the remark—"Such a thing *may* happen as that the woman, not the man, may be in the right, but ordinarily it was otherwise." Even Herrick, the English Catullus, whose amatory effusions resemble honey sweetened with sugar when characterizing womankind, could say nought better of it than that it is a sorry mixture of good and bad, gold and dross, worthiness and worthlessness, for so are his words to be interpreted:—

Learn of me what woman is,  
Something made of thread and thrumme,  
A mere botch of all and some!



## S h o p.

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It happened to the writer of this article, not very long ago, to find himself in the back parlour of a celebrated dog-fancier on the Surrey side of the river. His object was to purchase for a country friend the ugliest, and crossdest, and smallest bull-dog that could be got for money. The proprietor of the establishment, however, while professing to know exactly the kind of dawg that was required, admitted with great candour that he had none such in his possession. Propitiated by his sincerity, we consented to order from the bar—for he kept a public-house—two glasses of brown fluid, of the same price as sherry, one of which we devoted to wishing Mr. Napper health, happiness and prosperity. He sipped sparingly the other in acknowledgment of our politeness; and we then fell into conversation. Among the other claims to distinction which our host possessed, he evidently ranked none higher than his intimacy with the celebrated Mr. Calcraft; a friendship which seemed to have had its origin in the remarkable circumstance that the first pair of "Balmoral boots" which ever clasped the trim ankles of Mrs. Napper were fashioned by that illustrious artist. Rejoicing at the opportunity thus presented to us of learning something of that public functionary's tastes, habits, and manners in private life, we pressed the subject into detail. Mr. Napper disclosed to us many particulars of his friend's life and character which seemed to show that he was by nature of a peaceful and unoffending disposition, but which do not concern the purpose of the present article. But a trait which does concern it, and one on which Mr. Napper laid great stress, was this: that the *carriéx* was "excellent company," and that you might drink with him a whole evening without discovering his profession. We were a good deal struck with the observation, though less surprised at the reticence of the gentleman in question than at Mr. Napper's appreciation of it. For it was quite clear that he did not connect Mr. Calcraft's habitual abstinence from professional topics with the unpleasant nature of his avocations. Far from this—he evidently saw in it but the modesty of a great man, and the taste of a well-bred one, who dislikes talking about himself, or making much of such little services as he may have been able to render to the State. Mr. Calcraft, in short, though under strong temptation so to do, never "talked shop," and herein set an example to the world, on which it is our present purpose to moralize.

It is often said that he must be a very stupid man who cannot talk well about himself, and the truth which is expressed in this saying is the best excuse there is for your ordinary egotist. And where half-a-dozen people of different professions are assembled together, the record of each

man's personal experience is not unlikely to form the best kind of conversation of which the company is capable. Again, of course, when all the individuals of the party are of the same profession, it is only natural they should talk about it, and their talk will bore nobody. But when people denounce the habit of talking shop, they mean something different from either of these supposed cases. They are thinking of the position of some one or two unfortunate outsiders in a circle of professional men who persist in keeping the conversation to their own peculiar interests, either careless if the strangers are entertained with it or not, or else taking for granted that what is interesting to themselves must of necessity be so to other people.

To suffer under this infliction is one of the commonest of the evils to which humanity in society is heir. Who does not know the symptoms which announce its coming? who has not made, in his own person, frantic but futile efforts to arrest its course? Say you are at a dinner-party where the host and a majority of the male guests are barristers. While the ladies are present, some attempt at general conversation will, of course, be made, and, in proportion to the ability and general information of the company, will be successful. But no sooner have they disappeared, and the host bustling about towards the fire, has observed that it is a cold night, than Jones sees his chance even in this innocent remark, and informs his neighbour that he hopes it will be warmer to-morrow, when he has to start on circuit. *Quid plura?* At that magic word every tongue is unloosed. Feebly you murmur something about the hard winter, or the skating, or the hunting. Your words are drowned in copious reminiscences of the bar mess, circuit jokes, and judicial eccentricities. The demon of "shop" has taken the bit between his teeth, and you might as well attempt to make an angry woman hear reason as to divert the conversation into other channels. The reader will, of course, understand that we are very far from meaning that barristers when they form the majority of a company *always* conduct themselves in this way; we merely mean to recall by the reproduction of a few of its salient features what is the result when they do. Again, take a party of clergymen. You try to adapt yourself to your company by asking the reverend gentleman opposite, who looks as if he would like to talk, whether he has read the Bishop of Oxford's last speech? Before he has time to reply, the word "bishop" has acted like a charm, and roused the train of ideas ever uppermost in clerical minds. "Have you heard," shouts a fresh-coloured curate, from one end of the table to the other, "what our bishop said to little Chapters the other day about that new schoolroom he wants to build at Puddleston?" In vain you try back to him of Oxford; that prelate has excommunicated *you* for the remainder of the evening. Idly you endeavour to make your tormentors turn and rend each other by raising the Colenso controversy: in such a company as that there will probably be no readers, and but one opinion, of the work in question. No, it is no use; and you resign yourself for the next two hours to mild chaff of the diocesan—to the politics of the vestry and the schoolroom—to the deep-dyed depravity of Groggins, who won't

make his waggoner go to church—and the still darker wickedness of Gallons, who takes his wife to the public-house.

In exclusively rural neighbourhoods, where the guests are chiefly agricultural, the same nuisance may be looked for. At the very first pause in the conversation, after the men are left alone, is sure to come the ominous question, "At Oatsbro' last Wednesday, Mr. Mangold?" "Yes, Mr. Wurzel, I were; I didn't see you." "No, I had to look at some beast. Do you know what old Furrows got for his barley?" And so on to the end of the third bottle of port. It is unnecessary to multiply instances. Military shop about "knapsack drill" or Miss Velox; sporting shop; theatrical shop; even medical shop, the least offensive perhaps of any, are all pretty much alike in this one common feature: that all deal with the mere mechanical details of the respective professions which evoke them, and not with those higher interests which make all professions akin, and appeal to feelings and opinions which are common to mankind.

If we turn this subject round, and look at it from the other side, we shall get a still clearer view of the true natures of the offence. Why should this kind of talk be called "shop"? Doubtless the epithet was given to it, in the first instance, as simple slang. But is there no deeper propriety in the application of it than belongs to a mediocre witicism? Does not the reader now see that the word "shop," as applied to conversation, bears exactly the same relation to a higher order of professional discourse, as the shop proper bears to commerce in its best sense? There is no disgrace in keeping a shop. It is a creditable and useful occupation. Neither is there anything abstractedly unworthy in the barrister's talk about Mr. Baron Boozar's last joke, or what a mess poor Mr. Duffin made of his first brief. The bishop's reply to Mr. Chapters, and the iniquities of Groggins and Gallons, may be discussed with much practical advantage by an assemblage of clergymen. The price of Mr. Furrows' barley is instructive to the farmer. And knapsack and crinoline mix the *utile* with the *dulce* very properly for the youthful subaltern. There is nothing for either lawyer, parson, soldier, or farmer to be ashamed of in discussing these respective subjects. But what they should be ashamed of is the obtrusion of these topics upon persons not conversant with professional technicalities. And they deserve the ridicule which has been very freely showered upon them, from all time, if they imagine that every one outside of their own profession is dying with curiosity to know something of its common everyday routine.

Professional conversation of every kind has within itself the capacity of rising into a higher region, in which it becomes more or less catholic, and touches, as we have said, emotions common to mankind. But nobody ever dreams of calling this kind of conversation "shop." Law, divinity, the military art, medicine, even agriculture have, for their final causes, objects in which the whole human race is interested; and are, when engaged upon a large scale of action, concerned with those phenomena which are the fuel of romance and poetry. The description of a

battle by one who took part in it, or a criticism, say of the American campaigns by some general of recognized ability; such professional experiences as the "diary of a late physician;" or a clergyman's recital of deathbed scenes and strange confessions, are as interesting to one man as to another; and to call them shop would be absurd. These things illustrate each profession in its great ends, not in its petty means; as it exists for the good of the world, not as it exists for the profit or amusement of individuals; in a character, finally, which is interesting to all men, and which may, therefore, always speak without fear of being tiresome.

Having thus divided professional talk into the particular and the technical, which is shop, and the general and architectonic, which is not, it remains only to apply this distinction to a subject-matter we have not yet introduced, namely, literature. It is needless to say that none are more alive than literary men to the abomination of "shop" in other people. May we be allowed to add that they are proportionably blind to it in themselves.

Literature has this advantage over all other professions, that the catholic element in it is much larger than in any of them. It appeals to the whole world in a way in which neither theology, nor law, nor even warfare ever can. These, indeed, are but the raw materials of Literature. She is above them all and includes them all. What was said of philosophy—*Philosophia non est doctrina sed omnium doctrinarum mater*—we may say of literature in its relation to other professions as sources of conversational entertainment. These become interesting to the lay listener exactly in proportion to the wit, eloquence, or dramatic power with which they are handled; in other words, in proportion to the degree in which the language employed shows the presence of those qualities which constitute the excellence of literature.

With this superiority over all rivals in the extent of that higher level over which she can range without descending to the purely technical and mechanical, it might be expected, perhaps, that the followers of literature should be less tainted with the vice of "shoppiness" than the members of any other profession. Yet that such is not the case is evident not only to all persons who mix much in literary society, but to such as do but read the daily papers. It is to be feared, indeed, that what ought to have been the safeguard of men of letters, has in reality been the occasion of their falling; we mean this imperial character of Literature, which has seduced them into fancying that the world may be as curious to know the most trivial details which relate to her, as the vulgar are to learn who blacks an emperor's boots, or designs a princess's bonnet. But the truth is, that the popular inquisitiveness, even in regard to these last particulars, has dwindled much of late years; while with regard to literature, if it exists at all, it is literary men who have created it for their own special profit and advantage. But whether or not it be conceded that the appetite for this kind of "shop" is general enough to make the gratification of it profitable, it cannot be maintained that the office of purveyor is honourable. If the demand exist, no matter by whom

created, we do not go so far as to say that the supply of it is a discreditable pursuit in the abstract. It stands in just the same relation to good literature as "knapsack drill" to the campaign of Salamanca; as Groggins and Gallons to theology, as Boozer and Duffin to jurisprudence. If it really is so, that the world, which is so intolerant of all other shop, does like literary shop, we cannot, we say, blame those who talk and write it, any more than we can the followers of any other undignified but honest calling. It is not, strictly speaking, the loftiest position in the world to be taking down the guests names at a nobleman's party; but it has to be done, to please a certain portion of the public; and though people might laugh at Jenkins, they never seriously blamed him.

But the case is somewhat different if all this time the writers of literary shop have been mistaken, and the world is profoundly indifferent to the details which these gentlemen discuss. The *exact* truth on this point it would be difficult to arrive at. Common sense, however, would indicate—if we allow that to be our guide—that the public interest in such matters must be confined to the case of great men. No doubt, if the world hears that a new magazine is coming out, all who care for the fact care also to know that a Mr. Thackeray, or a Mr. Dickens, or a Lord Macaulay is going to write for it. But why they should care to be told that Brown, Jones, and Robinson, whose names they have never even heard of, are going to be contributors, we cannot tell. Mr. Thackeray himself has described very well in *Pendennis* the class of men to whom Brown, Jones, and Robinson belong; established literary workmen, known to the profession and the trade; scholars perhaps and gentlemen; men who write the greater part of what the public read in the reviews and newspapers, but who are themselves unknown, and care very little to be known. Is the world at large, then, really anxious to penetrate their obscurity, or is it persuaded, upon reading their names in print, that these are certain distinguished persons of whom it had been disgracefully ignorant, and is now thankful to be cognizant? We cannot say that we believe in either of these two suppositions. We will go further and say we think it very doubtful if the writers who drag such names into public believe it themselves. Why, then, it may be asked, do they write it, and why do newspaper editors and proprietors print it? In the first place we must remember that such intelligence fills up but a short space of those columns of miscellaneous news in which it usually appears. The compiler of such articles throws in a good deal which does interest the public, and slips in these scraps chiefly, we think, to gratify himself. For, secondly, it adds greatly to his own self-esteem, to be persuaded that the facts which he narrates are, whatever people may think, of real and permanent importance. If these men whose names he mentions are really great men, he too, may not, after all, be such a small one. If the most trifling features of literature are worthy of public record, there is hope for himself. As he cannot, for obvious reasons, enhance his own value by kicking down those beneath him, he has recourse to just the opposite system, namely, to shoving up those above him. If a man only five feet

high can be made to look six, a man only four feet high may perhaps be made to look five. Some such motives as these are what we think do unconsciously actuate many of those writers to whom we are indebted for that well-known species of article which we need not describe at greater length. It is just the old story in another shape of the man who played the "Cock" in *Hamlet*.

In assigning these motives for the production of a species of journalism which is now growing up like a rank weed in our literature, we are far from imputing any *special* weakness or folly to those who concoct it. Clergymen or barristers would like, just as well as literary men, to write about themselves and the doings of their own small circles. But literary men have the opportunity, and they have not. And we daresay, too, that many a literary "correspondent" merely writes about these matters because he is accustomed to talk about them; and for no worse motive than makes any other class of men in the world talk shop. But what we wish to impress upon the literary class is that such writing *is* shop, and just the same in principle as the parish talk of parsons, or the barrack talk of soldiers. All these relate equally to the mechanical routine—we had almost said drudgery—of the three professions; and contain nothing either to please or to improve persons who are not already familiar with them. Among a party of literary men seated round a club table, or enjoying a tavern dinner, such talk is natural, and perhaps profitable. But what reason there is why they should rush out, write it down, and print it, which would not equally justify curates, ensigns, or lawyers in rushing out and printing *theirs*, we defy any man to say. In a word, the outside public cares not for professional topics except when they rise above the lower level of the workshop into that broader region where they are to some extent common property. In the case of literature this region is wider, and extends lower than in the case of other professions. But literature, too, like them, has its mere mechanical sphere, its "shop," in fact; and this, we say, can be interesting only to the workmen.

We suppose it would be impossible to organize a Calcraft club. There are not, we fear, a sufficient number of gentlemen that way inclined in the whole kingdom, for Mr. Calcraft ever to find himself in a company where an allusion to the gallows would not savour of egotism. That great man accordingly has learned his lesson, and now, we are told, never broaches the theme, even in his cups. And yet there would be great excuse for him if he did. For the world is certainly more curious to know how great murderers die than how literary gentlemen live. And "our Newgate correspondent" would, we fancy, be read with an avidity which no one of the whole tribe of "Puffs" has ever yet succeeded in exciting. However, as this exalted kind of shop does not find its way into print, the question occurs if we could not dispense with what does. It cannot do much good; and it certainly does some harm. It either interests the public not at all, or interests them only by appealing to a silly curiosity. And it is unfair to men who, never having courted publicity, suddenly find it thrust upon them.



## Julius Cæsar.

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MODERN French literature is rich in works on Roman history. The passion of the French people for military glory, their worship of success, their inclination for rhetorical display, give them, perhaps, a special interest in tracing the career of the great conquering nation of antiquity, the founders of the mightiest of empires, most extensive in its sway, most enduring in its ultimate effects. Within the last twenty years there have appeared the monographs of Prosper Merimée on the Social war and the Conspiracy of Catiline; clear, shrewd, and accurate, and disfigured by none of the straining for effect which is the bane of so much French writing:—the brief and rapid résumé of Roman history by Michelet, quite as spirited, and almost as whimsical as his later writings on many other subjects:—the Roman history of Duruy, which, with a few sentimentalisms and other sins against what we should call good taste, is really a consummate model of a compact and full epitome:—the very elaborate and deeply learned work of Champagny on the Cæsars, warped unfortunately to a theory, and resolutely presenting to us the dark side, and nothing but the dark side, of an age and a people which deserve to be regarded on every side and in every light that history and philosophy can shed upon them,—as a complement and counterpart to the Cæsars of Champagny, the “Tacitus and his Age” of Dubois-Guchan, whose theory is precisely the opposite of Champagny’s, and sheds, with equal learning and with eloquence only a little inferior, a gleam of rose-colour over every figure and every incident of the period:—again, the light and graceful sketches to which Ampère has given the title of a “History of the Romans at Rome,” in which the existing monuments of the ancient city are made to tell, as it were, their own story, not without many a touch of modern political innuendo:—the “Roman Emperors” of Zeller, an essay, if not so brilliant and fascinating as some, more sound, perhaps, and solid than any of these:—lastly, the valuable “Picture of the Roman Empire” with which Amédée Thierry has crowned the series of histories in which he has more particularly traced the connection of the Romans with Gaul. From this work, which is a short sketch of principles and results, the English reader will collect a clearer idea of the working of the Roman character than from many complete and regular narratives.

Such, at least, is the series of works upon this immortal theme which recur to our recollection when invited to consider a new account of the greatest epoch of Roman history, introduced by a rapid review of the earlier career of the Roman people. The Emperor of the French, whose long-announced and much-expected life of Julius Cæsar is now at last

before us, can hardly have discovered a blank to fill up in the long array of works above referred to, though such is commonly the excuse of a new author when he ventures into the field with his contribution to the stock of our knowledge. He is more generally impelled really by a special impulse, by a special attraction to his subject, by a personal conviction that he has something of his own to say, and a mission to go and say it. The Emperor does not pretend to tell us what we did not know before. The facts of his immediate subject lie in a comparatively narrow compass, and have been marshalled before us in their order by all his predecessors in succession; nor does he profess to combine these clearly, more graphically than others: but he tells us plainly that he has a theory to illustrate, and he suggests to us in almost every page that he has a purpose to advance.

The theory which the new life of Cæsar is intended to illustrate is indicated more or less distinctly in various passages in the body of the work; yet the preface is evidently put forward with a view of explaining it deliberately at the outset.

"Historic truth ought to be no less sacred than religion. If the precepts of faith raise our soul above the interests of this world, the lessons of history, in their turn, inspire us with the love of the beautiful and the just, and the hatred of whatever presents an obstacle to the progress of humanity. These lessons, to be profitable, require certain conditions. It is necessary that the facts be produced with vigorous exactness, that the changes, political or social, be analysed philosophically, that the exciting interest of the details of the lives of public men should not divert attention from the political part they played, or cause us to forget their *providential mission*. . . . Let us take it for granted that a great effect is always due to a great cause, and not to a small one; in other words, an accident insignificant in appearance never leads to important results without a pre-existing cause, which has permitted this slight accident to produce a great effect. . . . If, during nearly a thousand years, the Romans always came triumphant out of the severest trials and greatest perils, it is because there existed a general cause which made them always superior to their enemies, and which did not permit partial defeats and misfortunes to entail the fall of the empire. If the Romans, after giving an example to the world of a people constituting itself and growing great by liberty, seemed, after Cæsar, to throw themselves blindly into slavery, it is because there existed a general reason which, *by fatality*, prevented the Republic from returning to the purity of its ancient institutions."

We have marked in italics the two passages which seem here to contradict each other, and to vitiate the whole of this reasoning. It is nothing new to trace the revolutions of empires to the agency of a Providence which directs them for its own wise and beneficent ends; it is nothing new to disregard all the moral evidence of providential design in the conduct of human affairs, and refer their issues to a blind Destiny or Fortune; it is not altogether unheard of even among writers of repute and pretenders to

philosophy and logic, to jumble the two theories together, and so ring the changes alternately, from mere caprice or carelessness, or for the indulgence of a rhetorical fancy, upon both the one and the other, to confound providence with fate, God with fortune. This is precisely what the poet Lucan has done in introducing the same subject—the narrative of the fall of the Roman commonwealth. The poet was a disciple of the Stoic philosophy : he was nephew and pupil of a great master of that school of thought ; he was versed in the logic of the declaimers, and his mind was stored with all the abundance of their figures and illustrations. He was a man of genius, an enthusiast, a fanatic, a great rhetorician if not a great poet ; but he never bore the character of a great reasoner ; and of the causes he assigned for the terrible revolution which he undertakes to describe in immortal verse, the first is precisely the same confusion of fate and providence that is here repeated to us :—

*Invida fatorum series, suminisque negatum  
Stare diu, nimioque graves sub pondere lapsus,  
Nec se Roma ferens.*

It was the act of destiny, a hard and hapless law of which no account can be required, which suffers not anything to grow too great upon earth ; the same destiny which, by and by, will destroy the whole world, and reduce all things again to chaos. Then follows—

*In se magna ruunt : lætis hunc numina rebus  
Crescendi posuere modum.*

Destiny is here transformed into deity, fate has assumed the name of providence ; and this providence lapses again, in the next line, into a capricious fortune, which takes a spiteful pleasure in thwarting human power itself, and will not suffer so sweet an enjoyment to fall to the lot of mortals :—

*Nec gentibus ullis  
Commodat in populum terræ pelagique potentem  
Invidiam fortuna suam.*

The poet has bestowed upon his thesis some rhetorical embellishment, which is lacking to the severe prose of our philosophical historian ; but the confusion between fate and providence is the same in both.

When the preface proceeds to illustrate this theory by particular examples, the purpose of the work that is to follow is immediately revealed. “ The preceding remarks sufficiently explain the aim I have in view in writing this history. This aim is to prove that when Providence raises up such men as Cæsar, Charlemagne, and Napoleon, it is to trace out to peoples the path they ought to follow ; to stamp with the seal of their genius a new era ; and to accomplish in a few years the labour of centuries. Happy the peoples who comprehend and follow them ! woe to those who misunderstand and combat them ! They do as the Jews did who crucified their Messiah ; they are blind and culpable : blind, for they do not see the impotence of their efforts to suspend the definitive triumph of good ; culpable, for they only retard progress, by impeding its prompt and fruitful application.”

If we paused to criticize the reasoning of this passage in which the introduction of the sacred name seems wholly irrelevant, as well as offensive, at least to the taste of English readers, we might perhaps ask how, in any case, the blind can be culpable for their blindness. Of those who crucified the Messiah it was distinctly said, "Not seeing, they did not see." They shut their eyes wilfully to facts which were patent to them, and, therefore, their sin remained; but if the providential mission of the great human triumvirate was so equally patent and palpable, the culpability of their opponents should be inferred, not from their being, as the writer here says, blind, but from their refusing to see what was so plainly obtruded upon them.

Nor does the confusion of thought end here. If Cæsar and Charlemagne and Napoleon were really raised up by a manifest Providence to effect certain ends which it was culpable in their contemporaries to ignore, at what period in their respective careers was this revelation actually made? Were the Romans bound to recognize the mission of Cæsar from the moment that he defied the dictator, or restored the trophies of Marius? Were the Saxons blind in disregarding the intimation conveyed by their bloodstained fields and smoking villages of the mission of Charlemagne to establish the church universal? Was the appointed overthrow of feudalism, and the new dispensation of the civil code, foreshadowed to every plain man's conviction by Napoleon's victory at Marengo, or his repulse before Acre?

It may be now an accepted truth that the author of the coup d'état is the saviour of society; but if he had suffered the common lot of unsuccessful rebels at Strasburg or Boulogne, would mankind stand convicted of culpable blindness in having acquiesced in his execution?

The confusion of thought at which we here glance for a moment seems indeed to be characteristic of the work generally. But it serves a purpose, and may not be wholly unconscious. The purpose of this remarkable book—for such with many literary and moral defects it undoubtedly is—is to explain and defend the career of the two Napoleons, and more especially of the later one, by its suggested analogy with that of Julius Cæsar. From the moment that the present Emperor of the French preferred his claim to supreme power from his descent from his imperial uncle, the marked similarity of his position to that of Octavius, the nephew of the great Julius, and heir of his fortunes, arrested universal attention. That it was paramount in Louis Napoleon's own consideration we can have no doubt. The title of Saviour of Society with which his flatterers greeted him, and to which he so complacently listened, was the direct application to him of the tribute of grateful enthusiasm which the Romans lavished upon the protector of the Senate, the people, and the gods of Rome. A change, however, has come over the dream of the new Augustus. The obstinate refusal of the Virgils and the Livys, the Lamartines and the Thiers' of the restored empire, to embellish the court of their expectant sovereign, has persuaded him perhaps that it is idle to

anticipate a revival under his patronage of the characteristic glories of an Augustan age; while at the same time the military renown which he has legitimately acquired by the successes gained "under his auspices" in Mexico and the Crimea, and under his direct command in Italy, have taught him, as we imagine, to look with some disdain on the prototype whose genius was eminently peaceful, and whose personal courage was dubious. Accordingly, it is pretty clear from the book before us that the Emperor wishes us to regard him as the analogue in modern history not so much of Octavius as of Julius Cæsar himself. He intrudes himself into the place which was before supposed to be sacred to the first, and him whom we used to call the Great Napoleon. We have presented to us a sort of dissolving view, in which the person of the founder of the dynasty is insensibly displaced by that of his successor, like those ingenious transformations of statuary which we witnessed the other day in the magic halls of the Polytechnic. Not, however, that the first Napoleon is to be altogether obliterated and extinguished by the substitution of his successor in his room. Roman history has fortunately provided us with another analogue for him. Julius Cæsar, too, had an uncle, and that uncle was no less than the great warrior, Caius Marius, the vanquisher of the faithless Jugurtha, the saviour of Rome from the Cimbri and the Teutons; the ruler of the republic through seven consulships, without the name, but with all the power of a king or a dictator; the assertor of great democratic principles, and oppugner of patrician privileges, the inaugurator of a new era of popular sovereignty; finally, we may add, as a parallel of our own, the refugee of a cruel fate and an ungrateful conspiracy, who sought a last asylum, "like Themistocles," on the shore of "Carthage." If then the Emperor feels it his destiny now to put off the robes of Octavius, and assume the sword and corselet of Julius, he has not left his illustrious uncle out in the cold, but he provided him too with a prototype of adequate merit and distinction. And in so doing, he leaves the niche of the more fortunate Augustus to be filled hereafter, under more auspicious circumstances, by a descendant, not, we sincerely hope, a collateral one, of his own.

Of the way in which this parallel between Cæsar and Napoleon, the elder or the younger, is suggested throughout this volume, many instances have been produced by the band of reviewers, under whose pen it has fallen during the last fortnight. There is none more prominent, or, so to say, audacious, than the exhibition of a pretended portrait of the Roman, idealized not from any one bust, or from any comparison of various busts of Cæsar, but from the artist's conception of the archetypal Napoleonic countenance. It is neither Cæsar nor the elder Napoleon, nor the younger, but something of all, not without a strong dash of Talma. Undoubtedly it is a very fine figure, and if ever it is actually realized in the flesh, we should perhaps be ready to admit that those who do not fall down and worship it are blind and culpable. At present, however, the æsthetic representation to us of the Napoleonic idea, so much diviner

than any of its historical incarnations, serves only to remind us how far the heroes whom we are invited to admire, have fallen short of the celestial avatar which may yet be expected to "crown the edifice."

It is curious indeed to think that any man's vanity should so beset him as to make him think, as in this case is but too apparent, that his personal estimation is enhanced among his fellow-men by this coaxed or forced assimilation of himself to any great man whatever. Is human nature really so frivolous as to be thus deluded? Are the French people in particular, so shrewd in detecting absurdities and self-deceptions, the slaves of this trifling pretension? Did Julius Cæsar try to fancy himself, or to make others fancy him, like Marius, or even like Alexander? No. It is the fact, and it is to the point to mention it, that it was not an uncommon vanity among Roman conquerors to assimilate themselves to the Macedonian hero. Lucullus thought himself like Alexander, so did Pompey, so did Crassus. Even Augustus, it is said, was not indisposed to the flattery of those who likened him to the champion of Western civilization in the face of Oriental decrepitude. But Cæsar never. In the perfect simplicity and absence of self-consciousness, which seems more perhaps than any other quality, to raise him above other heroes of history, Cæsar thought very little of himself, and least of all in comparison with any one else. Once indeed, it is said, he *contrasted* himself with Alexander, when it was brought to his mind at how early an age the Macedonian had established his glory, and that he himself, then mature in years, had as yet done nothing—neither served a consulship, nor governed a province, nor commanded an army. He contrasted, he did not compare himself. Even Augustus, who had, no doubt, many vanities and weaknesses, never dreamed of comparing himself with Cæsar. He, too, looked to himself and relied on his own resources; he looked forward to what he should do himself, not backward to what another had done before him; he drew his inspiration, and the word is hardly too strong for the impulse to administration and construction which animated him, from his personal examination of society around him, and accordingly he left a name, widely different in the ideas it raises in us from that of Cæsar, but not less suggestive than Cæsar's, of an era in human history.

When a book is put before us written by a personage so prominent in the drama of life, and about whose moral and intellectual characteristics we are naturally so curious, the first reflections which occur to us will, of course, refer to the author personally. But we will not suffer ourselves to be diverted any longer from glancing at least—which is all we propose at present—at the literary pretensions of a history which, notwithstanding the peculiar circumstances attending its publication, claims to be judged primarily on purely literary grounds. Let us put the emperor aside, and regard merely the author; let us sheathe the sword and veil the sceptre, and look simply at the book. We say at once that the work, as an indication of intellectual power, is a very remarkable one. We do not say that the History is a good one. The



greater part of the volume before us is devoted to a succinct history of Rome down to the era of Julius Cæsar; the latter part commences the biography of the hero, but does not carry it beyond the period of Cæsar's consulship, or the early years of his yet incomplete and undetermined career. We do not say that the history is a good one. In the first place, it is utterly, we had almost said ostentatiously, uncritical. Except on one or two points of very little importance, such as the settling of a date, there is no attempt to weigh conflicting evidence, to eliminate bad or dubious authority, to divine the truth of facts from the fragmentary hints which the wreck of time has left to us. There is no appearance of acquaintance even with the sources of doubt and suspicion about the whole of the earlier and much even of later Roman history which have been opened to us by the acuteness and criticism of modern inquirers. Niebuhr figures in these pages as a "learned German," along with Drumann, both learned, no doubt, but their respective learning bearing as much relation as that of Macaulay and Sir Cornewall Lewis. Of this last "learned Englishman," who thought as deeply as he read, and of the questions he has raised regarding the credibility of Roman history for the first three or four centuries it pretends to illustrate—questions which no historian of Rome has henceforth a right to pass over—the writer seems altogether unconscious. Mommsen, who also figures as a "learned German," should have taught a later writer on these subjects either to omit the early history, and especially that of the so-called "regal period," altogether, or to produce his reasons for venturing to treat it at all. Can it be, we are tempted to ask, that there was a parallel to be suggested, which the author could not prevail upon himself to discard; a parallel between the regal, the republican, and the imperial periods of Rome and those of France? Was it necessary for his theory to show from the presumed example of the ancient commonwealth, that the old French monarchy had its mission and its destiny; that in the fulness of time, progress and society demanded the substitution for it of a republic, and that the republic was "fated by Providence" to give way in due season to that which, in both cases, was to be the crown and flower of civilization, the empire? "*Rebus humanis inest quidam orbis*," said the fatalist Tacitus; and in this instance, as in so many others, the imperial author of this history embraces the same conclusion, and is at pains to show us the wheel in operation, whether it runs or slides or jumps in its progress.

Again, in the political remarks which are here and there interspersed with the narrative, the political moral with which a chapter is generally tagged, there is sometimes a want of logical consequence which is almost mortifying. In chapter iv. of the first book, under the title of "Mediterranean prosperity," we are presented with a survey of the material prosperity and resources of the countries around, and the islands within the basin of the great inland sea which was the centre of the Greek and Roman world. Such a survey deserved to hold a prominent place in any history of Rome; and Arnold, if we remember right, in his

biography of Augustus, had given a more general and a more graphical sketch of the same subject. Napoleon goes into it more particularly, enumerating the cities, specifying the products, estimating the military and naval resources, gauging the commercial advantages of every country in succession, without, we must add, any discrimination of the writers of various ages and various degrees of authority from whom he derives his information. Carthage and Egypt in the south, Spain in the west, Italy and Greece northward, Asia Minor and Syria eastward, pass in review before him, and in every quarter he notes undoubted signs of human energy and progress, whether indicated by Josephus or Strabo, by Pausanias or Dionysius of Halicarnassus.

The natural reflection, as it seems, from this survey, and the observation of the decline, more or less marked, in the prosperity of every one of these countries, compared with other outlying members of the human family, would be, that the great concerns and interests of the world are now carried on a vast and a distant theatre, not on an inland sea, however large, but on the ocean that surrounds the continents; that, as the world fills up with population, its business becomes, and will continue to become, more and more world-wide and universal. The globe is turned inside out; the activity of the world is exerted on its outer margins, not in its interior basins. It is not likely that the shores of Carthage and of Spain will ever again be the scene of such commercial intercourse as distinguished them in the early period of Greek and Roman history. But the eye of the Emperor glances from the southern, the western, the northern shores of the great French lake, and fastens upon the eastern; beholds there certain very patent signs of decay and decrepitude, and exclaims,—“The remembrance of such greatness inspires a very natural wish, namely, that henceforth the jealousy of the Great Powers may no longer prevent the East from shaking off the dust of twenty centuries, and from being born again to life and civilization!” The jealousy of the Great Powers! As if a decline which has dated from about fifteen hundred years ago was to be attributed to the modern theory of the balance of power two centuries old! Surely this is the vapid and aimless remark of a tired schoolmaster on shutting his class-book for the day! And yet, in the mouth of the master of thirty legions, it may indicate a policy and a purpose.

Nevertheless, the book is a remarkable one. It gives evidence of long and patient study, of comprehensive grasp of mind, persevering research, steadiness of aim. There is no trace, as far as we can judge, of any special cramming for the purpose. It bears, we think, unmistakable tokens of being the genuine work of the author whose name it bears—bears, at least, in the preface, for the majesty of empire, perhaps, does not allow it to appear on the title-page. It presents no appearance of being compiled from the hints of friendly professors, or the collections of hired secretaries. It betrays no imitation of, or competition with, any rival historiographer. It suggests the working of the severe scientific mind

of Italy, rather than of the brilliant theoretical genius of France. The author imposes a strict restraint upon himself, allows himself no pictorial effects, indulges in no general views and wide speculations, marshals his facts in close array, devotes page after page to statistical details, rejoices in tracing the development of the Roman power in the names and situation of the colonies, in the distribution of its forces, in the increasing numbers of its population returns. The history might have been modelled on the author's conception of the *Rationarium Imperii*, the Imperial calendar which Augustus elaborated with his own hand, and bequeathed as a heirloom to his successors. The style is grave, compact, transparent, not unlike the style of Cæsar himself in his *Commentaries*. It is the style of a man who feels himself superior to the petty vanity of the rhetorician, whose aim it is to instruct his reader, but who does not condescend to entertain him. It is the style of a monumental inscription, and seems to challenge the regard, not of contemporaries, but of a late posterity. If such ideas as these have been in the Emperor's mind, we think that he has not been unsuccessful in giving effect to his conception of the place in literature which is appropriate to his position in politics.

It is not till we have gone through two-thirds of the volume that we arrive at the hero himself. The history of Rome has been made to lead up to him. The constitution of the Commonwealth has been carried through centuries of conquests, shaded by occasional defeats, and the fruit of corruption and decay has been traced to seeds sown under the kings, and germinating, in their healthiest vigour, under the Republic. But Roman civilization has become over-ripe, the law of its development has been accomplished. The Republic has become impossible. It is time to inaugurate the Empire. In this conclusion we are fully disposed to agree. But the present volume carries the life of Cæsar no farther than to his consulship, through the first stages only of his attack on the ruling aristocracy. His views and plans are hardly yet patent to the general observer. It is easy to over-estimate the definiteness of his aims at this early period; and the author seems, perhaps, inclined to over-estimate it. But we cannot speak conclusively on this point till the later volumes of the work are before us; and it will be more interesting to the reader, and more respectful to its illustrious author, to defer our remarks on Cæsar's policy, and on the view he takes of it, together with the comparison he suggests between it and his own, till the whole is completed.

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## A Reminiscence of Cardinal Wiseman.

BY A PROTESTANT.

IN the winter of 1830-31, the British Catholics were represented at Rome by Cardinal Weld, of the Welds of Lulworth Castle. His Eminence was an English country gentleman, of the simplest manners, of no literary pretensions, of liberal politics, as were indeed all his Catholic countrymen in those days, and delighting to do the honours of the Eternal City to persons in any way connected with his family and home. It was to an intimacy of this kind that I was indebted for my introduction to the *Collegio Inglese*, at that time presided over by Dr. Wiseman. Among the students under his care was a young cousin of the name of Macarthy, with whom I soon formed a lasting friendship, and thus I was brought into frequent relations with the Rector of the College. These two men, Cardinal Wiseman, Catholic Archbishop of Westminster, and Sir Charles Macarthy, Governor of Ceylon, have passed away within a few months of each other, the younger going first; each having done, in his separate walk of life, that which is a man's first duty—to use the talents given to his charge for what he believes to be a right purpose and honestly to win the respect and regard of mankind.

There was then in the English College the fresh recollection of the grateful jubilee that had been held to celebrate the political emancipation of the Catholics of Great Britain by the long efforts and frequent sacrifices of the Liberal party in Parliament; and Dr. Wiseman was looked upon with little good-will by those who were content to base the spiritual and temporal government of the world on a relation of absolute authority and obedience. He had withdrawn his pupils from their attendance on the lectures at the Jesuit College; and it was rumoured that Pope Gregory had by no means maintained the amicable feelings which had been manifested towards him by Pope Leo, his fast friend and patron. However that might be, Dr. Wiseman pursued an independent course of action, and impressed on all who came within the more intimate circle of his acquaintance, his sincere desire to reconcile the liberties of literature and science with a respectful recognition of his ecclesiastical position.

His life and education had been somewhat cosmopolitan. Some German translator of his *Horæ Syriacæ* had described him in one many-syllabled word as the—"From-an-Irish-family-descended-in-Spain-born-

in-England-educated-in-Italy-consecrated Syrian scholar;" but he showed no inclination to merge his British nationality in his sacerdotal or scholastic character. His conversation ran mainly on subjects of English literature; and his greatest pleasure was to converse with his intellectual fellow-countrymen. He encouraged those tastes and habits among his pupils, as far as was consistent with the practices of a Catholic seminary. The books which were read aloud, according to conventual custom, during the noontide repast, were usually our British classics; and I remember, on more than one occasion of this kind, listening to a novel of Walter Scott's. Dr. Cullen was at that time the rector of the Irish College; but although I have met the future Catholic Primate of Ireland on high-days in the Hall of the *Collegio Inglese*, there was little intercourse between the two establishments, and apparently no close intimacy between the heads. The two bodies always walked separately in processions at great church ceremonies; and I am not aware that any of my English fellow-countrymen ever received such a tribute of fervid admiration as was paid to their Irish comrades, while, in their due turn, they were bearing aloft the Holy Father through the colonnades of St. Peter's at the festival of Corpus Christi, when a young English lady having exclaimed, "Oh, papa! do look at those handsome young priests; did you ever see such fine eyes?" was dreadfully shocked by the answer of one of them, in an unmistakable accent—"Thank you, Miss, for the compliment."

Another Irish ecclesiastic, however, Dr. McHale, Bishop of Killala—seemed more familiar with the inmates of the *Collegio Inglese*; perhaps from the very contrast of his character to that of the scholarly and courteous Dr. Wiseman, who used to watch the various demonstrations of his Hibernian zeal with considerable interest and amusement. That persistent nationality—which during his long career as Archbishop of Tuam has not only alienated Dr. McHale from all social intercourse with the representatives of British power in Ireland, but which has caused him to include in one sweeping denunciation the fiercest acts of old oppressors and the most benevolent efforts of modern legislators—the 'thorough' Strafford and the gentle Carlisle—had remained unaffected by the passive political attitude which was then the habit of the Roman Court—though not yet elevated into a doctrine—and refused to surrender an iota of his rights of resistance to civil authority. The example of Poland, just then succumbing after an heroic struggle to the colossus of the North, not only without the active sympathy of the Papal power, but with the distinct injunction to her ecclesiastics to submit humbly to the schismatic conqueror, was not calculated to assure the independent spirit of the Celtic prelate, who might anticipate a period when British diplomacy might turn against the Irish Catholic Church even her own spiritual arms, and coerce her to obedience by ultramontane aid. A result at that time by no means improbable: for who then dreamt of the political destiny

of Italy, which was quietly approaching to its dawn? Who then cared to trouble the pleasant somnolence of Art and Antiquity, in which the princes and peoples between the Alps and the sea reposed, with any more serious agitation than a commentary on Dante, the merits of Santa Filomèna, or the respective claims of the mature Pasta and the youthful Grisi? Happy days those for the tourist, whom no one troubled about his opinions or his religion—for the archæologist, who looked on Italy as an inexhaustible necropolis, and found it so—and for the collector, to whom every day noble poverty surrendered treasures of Art and curiosities of history at a moderate cost, with *giallo antico* not exhausted, and Constitutions undiscovered!

Yet, although the Protestant visitors of the English College were perfectly secure from any intrusive proselytism, and the only influences of the kind brought to bear were fair controversy when challenged and amiable inducements to see all that was best and most striking in the practice and symbolic action of the Roman Church, there was no concealment of the special interest attached to the circumstances and conduct of recent British converts. A Cornish baronet, far advanced in life, had not only lately professed himself a Roman Catholic, but, at his urgent desire, had been ordained a priest. The deepest anxiety was expressed as to his first performance of his mystical office; and it was hinted that a more than natural power of retentive memory was vouchsafed to him on the occasion. The son of Earl Spencer, who afterwards became notorious as Brother Ignatius, was at that time a resident in the college, and his first sermon in the church set apart for the services of the English Catholics, excited an intense interest among the students; and here, too, the success, though not very apparent to us curious Protestants, was a subject of much thankfulness. In all such matters Dr. Wiseman's interest was always affectionate and judicious, and never provoked any sense of extravagance in the outsiders.

Soon after the French Revolution of 1830 a remarkable company of Frenchmen arrived at Rome. The Abbé Lamennais, whose previous and future career I may assume to be generally known, came to demand justice of the chair of St. Peter against the throne of the *bourgeois* Gallican king. His enterprise of opening the public education of France to the free competition of the Church had been arrested by the law; and his young colleague, the Comte de Montalembert, had just commenced his strange and varied public life of distracted opinion and irreconcilable tendencies, by an eloquent and fruitless defence of the cause at the bar of the *Chambre des Pairs*. These two remarkable men were accompanied by the Abbé de Caux and M. Rio, now well-known throughout Europe as the graceful and pious historian of Christian Art. Lamennais, like Dr. Wiseman, had received Pope Leo the Twelfth's intellectual sympathy and honourable protection, and the author of the *Essai sur l'Indifférence* was known to have been designated at that time for the highest dignities



of the Church : but another spirit now predominated in the Roman Court, and he and his lieutenants were received with more than coldness and disregard. It did not, perhaps, become any non-Catholic to judge the causes of this policy. It certainly appeared to the casual observer that the dominant motives of the actors in these scenes were the disinclination to quarrel with the representatives of a successful revolution in France, and an indistinct dread of the large and popular basis on which the Abbé Lamennais was content to rest the authority and destiny of the Catholic Church. It is, however, no doubt open for any believer to discern in this repudiation of the future heretic and revolutionist a superior prescience of the danger of giving trust or favour to a lofty intelligence liable to serious aberration, and a mind too haughty to be steadfast in its service to any external rule. Be this as it may, the immediate impression was eminently disagreeable. You saw a man who had grown great in the defence of the Church, now that he had pushed forward some theories, which had the acceptance of the more earnest Catholics in France, with an inconvenient enthusiasm, not only left unsupported in his struggle but regarded with aversion. He had difficulty in even getting access to the Pope; and one day, when he showed some little resentment on this score, a *Monsignore* superciliously observed that the Abbé surely did not come from a country in which his order were treated with especial respect. "You are mistaken, sir," said Lamennais; "in France no one despises a priest—they reverence him, or they kill him."

To these missionaries of a wider and braver Catholicism Dr. Wiseman proffered a generous hospitality, which was thankfully received. The minute person and phthisical constitution of Lamennais did not permit him to take any important part in general society; but the charm and earnestness of Montalembert—so French in his emotions and so English in his thoughts—competed with the simple, audacious spontaneity of his Breton colleague Rio—a Christian in politics and an artist in religion—to make the conversation of the decorous seminary as bright and coloured as that of the gayest Paris drawing-room. After the publication of the *Affaires de Rome*, the breach between the Abbé Lamennais and the Church probably precluded all future intercourse between the reformer and the prelate: the host of that table rose in honourable gradation to the loftiest functions of his profession; and of the guest I will only record what a French artisan said to me in 1848, when I asked whether he knew by chance where M. Lamennais lodged?—"Dans cette maison—là très-haut—tout près du ciel."

This is not the place to praise or criticize the lectures on the "Connection between Science and Revealed Religion," which I heard delivered by Dr. Wiseman in the apartments of Cardinal Weld during the Lent of 1835. But it is well to remember that at that time the subject was comparatively new, and the knowledge imparted in a great degree necessarily derived from original sources. The matter was not then contained in popular

works, but had to be sought at first-hand. As the teleological arguments which the Bridgwater Treatises and their successors had urged to weariness had not then familiarized the public mind with the connection between the truths of science and those of natural religion, so the abundant illustrations which Scripture may derive from ethnology, philology, and archæology were then confined to the learned, and had not been made the staple of endless Lectures, Essays, and Dictionaries. Thus these discourses were most interesting to all who heard them, and though, perhaps, the wide range they took created some distrust in the perfect accuracy of the author, yet his acknowledged eminence in one portion of Oriental philology fairly suggested the inference that he would not run the risk of careless assertions on inadequate knowledge in other portions of his work. He did not give these lectures to the public till after his settlement in England, and even then with some hesitation, as the preface avers. In announcing the publication to a friend, he wrote: "In a moment of great presumption, I resolved to premise to them a sonnet by way of dedication. I send it for your friendly inspection, requesting not merely that you will suggest any alteration, but that you will frankly say, if you think so, that it will not do. For I am far from believing myself anything so great as a poet." This was the sonnet:—

Some dive for pearls to crown a mortal brow,  
Some fondly garlands weave to dress the shrine  
Of fading beauty: so is my design,  
Learning t' enchase that lay concealed till now,  
And from known Science pluck each greenest bough;  
But not to deck the earthly, while Divine  
Beauty and majesty, supreme as thine,  
Religion! shall my humble gift allow.  
Thine was my childhood's path-lamp, and the oil  
Of later watchings hath but fed the flame:  
While I, embroid'ring here with pleasant toil  
My imaged traceries around thy name,  
This banner weave, in part from hostile spoil,  
And pay my fealty to thy highest claim.

In a postscript he added, "Even if approved, I do not think that I shall have courage to publish it." The friend thus appealed to may probably have suggested that the lectures would be quite as well without the "verses dedicatory;" and I am not aware that they have ever appeared in print; but they are now not without a touching interest of their own, not only from the becoming diffidence shown by a man who even then lived among much to encourage vanity and self-confidence, but from the simple sentiment they express, and which his whole life illustrated. It has been stated that, shortly before his death, the Cardinal assembled the Chapter of his Church around his bed, and expressed to them his thankfulness that he had never been troubled by any difficulties or mental anxiety in matters of Faith. These lectures convey precisely

that impression. If Science can make itself useful and ancillary to Faith, so much the better for Science. As Lamennais himself once wrote, "Le monde matériel est Dieu mis en doute: gare à celui qui se laisse prendre!"

It was with no intention of leading a secluded or scholastic life that Dr. Wiseman came to England. He mixed freely in the interests and topics of the time, and I have just laid my hand on a letter in which he describes his attendance at a great meeting for the Irish Protestant clergy. "Heartily," he writes, "as I pity the individuals in distress, and wish that the triumph which is achieving could be bought without inflicting the slightest suffering on any human being, the tales which were unfolded could not but excite in my mind a feeling of self-congratulation and joy, in thinking that I was, perhaps, the only one in that assembled multitude who saw therein a stroke of retributive justice for injuries long inflicted under the pretence of religion. I have just come from Ireland, remember, from my first visit after twenty-five years, and I have warmed my patriotism at my domestic hearth, in the hall of my forefathers, who suffered and died for their religion. But I am getting into Mr. M——'s vein—*alias* King Cambyses'. Mr. M. was one of the speakers, and certainly very eloquent, but ranting and scenic."

Both at Oscott, where he superintended a college founded in a wholesome spirit of rivalry to the monopoly of Stonyhurst in the education of the Catholic gentry of England, and in his offices of Coadjutor and of Bishop of the London District, Dr. Wiseman extended his society beyond his co-religionists, and would in time have come to be regarded as any other distinguished man of letters. A decorous precedence was willingly given to him in Protestant houses, and he was becoming gradually esteemed as an author, although naturally his books were received with more favour and less criticism among those who sympathized with his opinions and objects than by the general reader. His style never became agreeable to ordinary English taste; the foreign education of his young manhood damaged the force and even the correctness of his diction, and a certain natural taste for richness of form and colour encumbered his writings with superfluous epithets and imagery. These defects would no doubt have been diminished by a longer and more frequent intercourse with the best-instructed of his countrymen; but in the year 1850 he returned to Rome, with the intention, it was reported, of taking up his abode there. I remember indeed his saying to his cousin Macarthy, who was then rising fast towards the highest grades of the Colonial service, "When you are tired of governing in all parts of the world, come and visit me in my *terzo piano* of——" some Roman palace which he particularly liked—I think it was the Colonna. But no such repose was in store for him. He returned to England, the first Roman Cardinal that had stood on British soil since Pole had died amid the fires of Smithfield, with the missive from the Flaminian gate in his hand, the agent of a bloodless but not innocuous revolution.

The story of the so-called Papal Aggression has yet to be written. The circumstances of the affair were crowded with misapprehension on all sides. There had been much to induce the belief, on the part of the Catholics, that a prince of the Roman Church and Court would be received without disfavour in England. The Government had only lately passed an Act of Parliament authorizing diplomatic relations with Rome; and in the debate on Lord Eglintoun's clause, which limited the selection of the Papal envoys to this country to laymen, it has been distinctly stated in the House of Lords, on the Liberal side, that there would be no objection to the presence of a Cardinal in England. Again, the extent and power of the High-Church party that had lately developed itself at Oxford was extravagantly exaggerated by the Catholics, both at home and at Rome. The entirely intellectual character of the movement, and the certainty of its indignant repulse the moment it came into contact with the habits, instincts, and traditions of the English people, were not perceptible to Dr. Wiseman, whose recent few years of residence in his native land could not compensate for an early life of foreign impressions. How far he may have been encouraged in his notion of the improved feelings of this country towards Roman Catholicism by members of the Tractarian party, I have no means of knowing; but with some of them he had friendly relations, and he had been one of the first of the authorities of his Church to approach them with a sympathetic interest, and to attract them to what he believed the only safe conclusion by a kindly appreciation of their doubts and difficulties.

He had also had an interview and conversation with Lord John Russell before he left England for Italy, of which he always spoke as affording a vindication of his future proceedings. Its confidential and private nature, he said, prevented him from appealing to it during his lifetime; but he had written a record of it, which must, some day, be generally known, and would seriously affect the estimate of the imprudence of his conduct. If this is so, it is the more singular that the first overt act declaratory of opinion in high places, and premonitory of public indignation, should have proceeded from Lord John Russell. What was called "the Durham letter" was no doubt his personal production, and in no way sanctioned by his Cabinet; but it had all the effect of a political Encyclic. Looking back on the affair, after the lapse of years, the chief mistake seems to have been the simultaneity of the new ecclesiastical arrangement and the advent of the Cardinal Archbishop. Either the one or the other by itself would have met with the usual amount of popular criticism as an unwelcome novelty, and here died away after a nine-days' bluster. When the vivacity of public feeling then aroused is remembered, it now seems fortunate for the religious liberties of our country that the issue was no worse than the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill, which in its result, and probably in the intent, exactly corresponded with the judgment of an *abus de pouvoir* delivered by the French High Court against the prelates who interfere too

prominently in political concerns. It was an official censure, *quantum valeat*, and nothing more.

But on the minds of individual Catholics, especially those prominently engaged in the matter, the Protestant demonstration produced a sense of indignant surprise. There was so much to be said in their favour on logical grounds, and the inferences from arguments of religious freedom were so patent, that the public condemnation struck them as something beyond the ordinary condition of public policy, and as tainted with personal ill-feeling and special injustice. Thus the Cardinal placed himself before his countrymen in the attitude of constant reproach for a grave wrong committed not only against his person and his community, but against the liberal principles of the men and the party with whom the Catholics of England had been for so long connected. His position among us must, in any case, have been somewhat anomalous and discomfortable. The social rank of the Cardinalate had formed the subject of dispute with half the Courts of Christendom. It had been asserted to be higher than that of the members of the Royal Family itself in any foreign country, inasmuch as every Cardinal was not only a prince of the Roman State, but *particeps regni Romani*, and as such notified his accession to all Catholic sovereigns. And though this assumption has been rarely, if ever, admitted, yet it is difficult to imagine where that awful tribunal—the Board of Green Cloth—could have decided to range the Cardinal, so as to be agreeable to the feelings of the Papal Court, and even to the custom of Catholic countries, and not to shock the precise and historical gradations of rank assigned to the subjects of the British Crown. But even in the various circles of private life the Cardinal was much restricted by the dignity of his position. He had to be treated as a Prince in a society which dislikes ostentation and restraint, and which becomes exclusive from its inclination to ease and equality. He did not fare better with his individual relations with the Protestant world; they gradually became weaker even where they had been the closest; and except on such occasions as his appearance as a lecturer at the Royal Institution, his last years were passed in the diligent discharge of his episcopal duties, and in company where his intellectual as well as his social superiority remained unchallenged.

Apart from the advantages which the internal administration of the Roman Catholic Church in this country may have derived from the change, it now appears very questionable whether the coming of Cardinal Wiseman is not rather a subject of regret than of happy retrospect to the Catholics themselves. It began by driving out of public life some most estimable men, such as the late Duke of Norfolk and Mr. Torrens McCullagh, who led the hopeless opposition to the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill; it has made it next to impossible, for many years to come, for any Catholic to represent an English constituency; it has embittered the fair discussion of questions in which the discipline and the customs of the Roman Catholic Church come into contact either with the moral prejudices or the intellectual pretensions of

their Protestant fellow-countrymen ; it has reopened the ancient wounds of Irish party-animosity which the great common calamity of the Famine had gone far to cauterize ; and it has dissociated the leading Catholics in England from those liberal traditions which, if unbroken, might now enable them to do a signal service to their age and their religion, by making them the mediators between the providential necessities of the fruitful present and the deep-rooted associations of decaying systems.

Such might have been the function of Nicholas Wiseman, had not circumstances, rather than conduct, placed him in a groove in which he was compelled to continue to the end. The supposition which I have heard expressed, even by the Roman Catholic clergy, that he might have ascended the chair of St. Peter, after the demise of its present occupant, is extravagant. The Italian portion of the Conclave, as long at least as the temporal power is throned in the Vatican, will not relax the rule, established centuries ago, to limit the selection of the Pope to the *prelatura* of Italy ; nor is it probable that there would be ever such a concordance of opinion in the representatives of other nations as to afford any chance of breaking down this monopoly. But even though he had never attained any of the highest clerical dignities, Dr. Wiseman, in the ordinary course of his profession, would have exercised a very wide moral influence by the general justice of his mind and the sweetness of his disposition. If he had to be intolerant, it was against the grain ; and perhaps he gladly took refuge in a somewhat pompous rhetoric from the necessity of plainly expressing unpalatable truths and harsh conclusions. Such at least is the estimate of one who knew him intimately for many years, and who will ever retain a pleasant and affectionate memory of his talents and his virtues.

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